THE BEAUTIES OF ROUSSEAU;

SELECTED BY A LADY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"FRANCE HAS HER BEAUTIES TOO."——ORRERY.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. HOOKHAM, NEW BOND-STREET.

MDCCLXXXVIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR LLOYD KENYON, BART.

MASTER OF THE ROLLS,

THESE VOLUMES

ARE INSCRIBED,

WITH ALL DEFERENCE AND RESPECT,

BY HIS MOST OBEDIENT,

AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

ELIZA ROBERTS.

LONDON, 4th JUNE, 1788.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Beauties of the celebrated J. J. Rouſſeau recommend themſelves; and any introductory Apology, either to excuſe the Tranſaction, or to point out the Claims of the Original to attention, would be to inſult the Genius of the Author, and the underſtanding of the Public. I ſhall, therefore, only obſerve, on this Head, that I have faithfully endeavoured to preſerve the Senſe, when I found it impoſ-

ſible

ſible to infuſe the Spirit of my Author; and, that whatever defects may be found in either, I truſt there will be diſcovered nothing offenſive to the Intereſts of Religion, or Morality. If I have done both thoſe and my Author Juſtice, by ſelecting only ſuch Parts, as "teach the Paſſions to move at the "command of Virtue," I ſhall have performed a duty to Rouſſeau, to my Sex, and to the Public.

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THE

BEAUTIES OF ROUSSEAU.

GOD.

WHETHER matter was eternal or created; whether it has a paſſive principle; or whether it has not, it is ſtill moſt certain, that the whole is in one ſole correſpondence; for I ſee nothing that is not diſpoſed in the ſame ſyſtem, and that does not conſpire to the ſame end; that is to ſay, the maintaining every thing according to the order eſtabliſhed.

That Being who wills and ordains, who is active in all, who preſides over the whole univerſe, and orders all things, I call God. With this name I combine the ideas of correſpondence, power, and will, that I have aſſembled; and that of goodneſs, which is the neceſſary conſequence; but I am not the better acquainted with the Being to whom I have aſcribed theſe attributes. He is concealed equally from my ſenſes and my knowledge; the more I think, the more I am perplexed. Of his exiſtence I am convinced; convinced that he exiſts of himſelf. I know that my exiſtence depends on him, and that all things within my knowledge are in the ſame circumſtances. I trace the Almighty in all his works; I feel the Deity within

within me; I perceive him in every thing around me: but when I would contemplate him in himſelf, when I would know where he is, what he is, what is his form, he is loſt to me; my detailed imagination no longer diſtinguiſhes its object. God is intelligent, but how? Man is intelligent when he reaſons; and the Supreme intelligence has not occaſion to reaſon; for him, there is neither premiſes or conſequences; there is not even propoſition; he is wholly intuitive; he ſees equally all that is, and all that can be; every truth is to him one ſole idea, as every place is one point, and all times one moment.

Human power acts by means; the power of God acts by itſelf. He does, becauſe he wills;—the will of

God forms his power. God is good, nothing is more manifeſt; but the excellence of man is the love of his fellow creatures. The excellence of God is the love of order; for it is by order, that every thing is maintained which exiſts; and that the union of each part forms the whole.

That God is juſt I am convinced; it is the conſequence of his goodneſs; the injuſtice of men is their own work, and not his. I have moral diſorders, which depoſe againſt Providence in the eyes of philoſophers, only demonſtrate it more clearly to me. But the juſtice of man is to give to each what is his due; and the juſtice of God to require of each an account of what he has given him.

Of

Of all the attributes of the All-powerful Deity, goodneſs is that, without which, we can have no conception of him. When the ancients called *Optimus Maximus*, the ſupreme God, they were right; but in ſaying *Maximus Optimus*, they would have been more correct, ſince his goodneſs is the effect of his power. He is good, becauſe he is great.

Ought we to penetrate into theſe abyſſes of metaphyſics, which have neither depths or bounds; and loſe in diſputing on the divine eſſence, that ſhort time which is given us to honour him? We know not what he is, but we know that he is; let that ſatisfy us; he makes himſelf known in all. We ſee him in all his works, and feel his influence in every

action. We may diſpute concerning him, but we cannot truly diſbelieve in him.

The more I endeavour to contemplate his divine eſſence, the leſs capable am I to conceive it; but he exiſts,—that is ſufficient. The leſs I conceive, the more I adore. I humble myſelf before him, and ſay, Being of Beings! I am, becauſe thou art; it is elevating myſelf to my ſource, to contemplate thee inceſſantly. The beſt uſe of my reaſon is to humble myſelf before thee: it is the rapture of my ſoul; it is the charm of my weakneſs to feel myſelf overwhelmed with thy greatneſs.

Nothing exiſts but by him who is: it is him that gives a ſcope to juſtice, a baſe to virtue, a value to this ſhort life

life employed to pleaſe him: it is he who unceaſingly exhorts the guilty, that their crimes, however ſecretly committed, are beheld; and ſays to the juſt man, whoſe merit is in obſcurity, thy virtues have a witneſs: it is him, it is his unalterable ſubſtance, that is the true model of thoſe perfections of which we bear the image within us. Our paſſions would in vain disfigure it; all his traits, united to infinite eſſence, repreſent it always to the reaſon, and re-eſtabliſh what impoſition and error had impaired.

Keep your ſoul in ſuch a ſituation as to deſire there ſhould be a God, and you will never doubt his exiſtence.

If I exerciſe my reaſon; if I cultivate it; if I make a proper uſe of

the immediate faculties that God has given me, I ſhall from myſelf learn to know him, to love him, to love all his works, to ſeek the good he ſeeks, and, to pleaſe him, fulfil all my duties upon earth. What can all the knowledge of man teach me more?

Source of truth and juſtice, beneficent and good God! in confidence of thee, the ſupreme wiſh of my heart is that thy will be done. In wiſhing this, I do as thou doſt; I acquieſce in thy goodneſs, and ſeem to anticipate the poſſeſſion of that ſupreme felicity which is the reward of it.

THE UNIVERSE AND SUPREME INTELLIGENCE.

THERE is a book open to all eyes;—it is that of nature. It is in this grand and ſublime work that I learn to ſerve and adore its divine author. Nobody can be excuſed reading it, for it ſpeaks one univerſal language, comprehenſive to every mind.

If mute matter ſhews me a will, this mute matter, according to certain laws, exhibits an intelligence; to act, compare, and chuſe, are the operations of an active and thinking being: therefore that being exhiſts. Where do you behold his exiſtence? not only in the moving ſky, in the ſtar that lights us; not only in man, but

but in the ſheep that bleats, the bird that flies, in the ſtone that falls, and the leaf that is borne by the winds.

I can judge of the order of the world; that I am ignorant of its end, becauſe to judge of that order, it is ſufficient to compare each part of it, to ſtudy their concurrence, their connection, to obſerve the harmony of the whole. I know not how the univerſe exiſts; but that does not prevent my ſeeing how it is modelled. I do not the leſs perceive that intimate correſpondence by which every being that compoſes it give mutual aſſiſtance to each other. I am in the ſituation of a man the firſt time he ſees a watch opened, he cannot forbear admiring the work, though he does not know the uſe of it, or ſhould not have ſeen the dial plate. I know not,

not, he would ſay, the uſe of the whole, but I perceive that each piece correſponds with the other; I admire the workman in the progreſs of his work; and I am certain that all theſe wheels do not run in concert thus, but to produce ſome great purpoſe, which it is impoſſible for me to perceive.

Compare each particular end, the means, the ordained connection of every ſeat, then liſten to the voice within; what well judging mind can reſiſt the conviction it gives? To all unprejudiced eyes, the immutable order of the univerſe muſt announce a ſupreme intelligence to direct it; and what ſophiſtry muſt be called in to deſtroy the effect which a contemplation of the univerſal harmony of all beings, and the admirable connection

of

of each part for the preſervation of the others, muſt naturally produce on the mind. Talk what they will of combinations and chances; of what uſe is it to ſilence, if they cannot convince me; and how will they deſtroy that involuntary ſentiment in my mind, which contradicts them even in ſpite of myſelf? I was ſurpriſed, and almoſt ſcandalized at reading Nieuventil. How could he attempt to write a book on the wonders of nature? His book would be large as the univerſe itſelf ere the ſubject was exhauſted; in deſcribing each particular, the greateſt miracle eſcapes,—the wonderful harmony and concord of the whole. The creation alone, of living and organized beings, is an abyſs for the human underſtanding. The inſurmountable barrier which

which nature has placed between each diſtinct ſpecies, ſo that they ſhould not be confounded, demonſtrates his intentions on the fulleſt evidence. He is not ſatisfied with having eſtabliſhed order; he has taken infallible means to prevent its being diſturbed.

There is not a being in the univerſe who may not in ſome reſpect or other be looked upon as the common centre of the others around whom they are placed; ſo that all are reciprocally the means and end one relatively to the other. The mind is confuſed and loſt in contemplating this infinity of connection, of which not one is confuſed or loſt in the multitude. What abſurd ſuppoſitions to deduce from this harmony, the blind mechaniſm of matter accidentally formed,

formed! Thoſe who deny the unity of intention, manifeſted in the connection of each part that compoſes the great whole, would in vain cloak their nonſenſical obſtructions with coordinations, general principles, and emblematic terms; do what they will, it is impoſſible for me to conceive a ſyſtem of beings ſo conſiſtently ordered, without conceiving an intelligence that orders them. It depends not on me to believe, that paſſive and dead matter could have produced thinking and living beings; that a blind chance could produce intelligent beings; that what does not think, could produce that which does.

Experience and obſervation have taught us the laws of motion; theſe laws determine effects, without ſhewing their cauſe; they are not ſufficient

ficient to explain the ſyſtem of the world, and the motion of the univerſe. Deſcartes formed the heavens and earth with dice; but he could not give the firſt motion to theſe dice, nor play off the centrifugal force, but by the aſſiſtance of a rotational movement. Newton diſcovered the law of attraction; but attraction alone would ſpeedily reduce the univerſe to one immoveable maſs; to this law he was obliged to add a projective force, to deſcribe the curve to the celeſtial bodies. Let Deſcartes tell us what phyſical law has turned his vortex; let Newton ſhew us the hand that hurled the planets on the tangent of their orbs.

The philoſopher who flatters himſelf with having penetrated into the ſecrets of the Almighty, dares to

aſſociate

aſſociate his knowledge with divine wiſdom: he approves, blames, corrects, preſcribes laws to nature, and bounds to the Divinity, while he is occupied with his chimerical ſyſtems, and gives himſelf ſuch infinite pains to arrange the mechaniſm of the world. The labourer, who beholds the rain and ſun alternately fertilize his fields, admires, praiſes, and bleſſes the hand from which he receives theſe benefits, without meddling with the means by which they were attained; he ſeeks not to juſtify his ignorance or vices by his incredulity; he cenſures not the works of his God, nor does he attack his maſter to diſplay the luſtre of his own underſtanding. Never would the impious impreſſion of Alphonſus the Tenth have entered the mind

of

of an unlearned man; it was for the mouth of a ſcholar, that this blaſphemy was reſerved *.

* Alphonſus the Tenth, king of Caſtile, ſaid, that if the Almighty had aſked his opinion in the formation of the world, he would have given him ſome good advice. The multitude of uſeleſs circles that the mathematicians of his time ſuppoſed to explain the celeſtial motion, probably gave birth to this licentious thought of a prince, who was ingenious enough to wiſh for that ſimplicity in the mechaniſm of the world, which has ſince been diſcovered.

ATHEISM AND FANATICISM.

THE great view of nature, ſo lively, ſo animated for thoſe who acknowledge the Deity, is dead to the eye of the atheiſt, in the univerſal harmony of beings, where all ſpeak ſo eloquently the God who created them. He perceives only an eternal ſilence.

Boyle has clearly proved, that fanaticiſm is more pernicious than atheiſm. It is inconteſtible, he might have added, with equal truth, that fanaticiſm, though cruel and ſanguinary, is, notwithſtanding, a great and noble paſſion; it elevates the ſoul of man, makes him deſpiſe death, gives him an immenſe juriſdiction, and only requires being better

ter directed, to produce the moſt ſublime virtues; inſtead of which, want of religion, and, generally ſpeaking, a reaſoning and philoſophic diſpoſition attaches to this life, effemenizes, and degrades the ſoul, concenters all the paſſions in the meanneſs of a particular intereſt, in the abſtraction of ſelf-love, and ſaps by degrees the true foundation of all ſociety; for what particular intereſt has in common is ſo little, that it can never balance againſt what is in competition with it. If atheiſm does not occaſion bloodſhed, it proceeds leſs from a love of peace, than an indifference for what is good; it is of little conſequence to the pretended philoſopher how things go, provided he can remain quiet in his cloſet. His principles are not to deſtroy

mankind, but to obſtruct their exiſtence, by deſtroying thoſe morals that multiply them, in detaching them from their ſpecies; in reducing all the affections to one ſecret egotiſm, as fatal to population as it is to virtue. A philoſophical indifference reſembles the tranquility of a deſpotic ſtate; it is the tranquility of death, more deſtructive than even death itſelf.

RELIGION.

OF how many advantages are thoſe deprived to whom religion is wanting! What ſhall conſole them in affliction? What beholder ſhall animate them to the performance of ſecret good? What voice ſpeaks from the receſſes of their ſouls? What reward can they expect for their virtue? How ſhall they encounter the bitterneſs of death? A laſt reſource to employ againſt the unbeliever, is to awaken his feelings, to ſhew an example to lead him to place religion in ſo amiable a point of view as to make it irreſiſtible. What an argument againſt infidelity is the life of a true Chriſtian! can any body be proof againſt it? What

a picture for his heart, when his friends, his wife and children, all conſpire to inſtruct, in edifying him. When, without making the Deity the ſubject of their diſcourſe, he is evinced in all their actions, in the virtues he inſpires, in the charm they feel in pleaſing him; when he beholds the image of Heaven ſhine forth in his houſe, when once in each day he ſhall be forced to ſay to himſelf, man is not thus of himſelf; ſomething more than human reigns here!

A happy inſtinct leads me to what is right; a ſtrong paſſion riſes which has its root in the ſame inſtinct. What muſt I do to deſtroy it? From the conſideration of order, I perceive the beauty of virtue, and its value from the general utility. But what does

does all this make againſt my particular intereſt, and which upon the whole concerns me the moſt my happineſs procured at the expence of others, or their happineſs at the expence of mine; If the fear of ſhame or puniſhment prevents my doing evil, I have only to do it privately; if I am ſurpriſed in the fault, it would be puniſhed as at Sparta; not the crime, but the unſkilfulneſs. In fine, let the character and love of good be imprinted on the inmoſt receſſes of my ſoul. I ſhould keep my rule ſo long as it was not disfigured. But how ſhall I aſſure to myſelf the preſervation, in all its purity, of this internal emblem, which has not amongſt all ſenſible beings, a model by which it can be compared? Is

it not known that unruly paſſions corrupt the judgment as well as the inclinations; and that the conſcience alters and models itſelf inſenſibly in each age, in each people, in each individual, according to the inconſtancy and variety of prejudices. Let us adore the Eternal Being, and with one blow we ſhall deſtroy theſe phantoms of reaſon, which have only a deceitful appearance, and vaniſh before the ſplendor of immutable truth.

The forgetfulneſs of religion, leads to the forgetfulneſs of all the duties of humanity.

Fly thoſe who, under pretext of explaining nature, ſow affecting doctrines on the heart of man, of whom the apparent ſcepticiſm is more po-

ſitive

ſitive and dogmatic than the deciſive tone of their adverſaries. Under the haughty pretence, that they alone are enlightened, right, and of true belief, they imperiouſly exact a ſubmiſſion to their trite deciſions, and pretend to give as the true principle of things, the unintelligible ſyſtems formed by their imagination. And, finally, they overthrow, deſtroy, and trample under foot, all that is moſt reſpectable to man; they deprive the afflicted of the laſt conſolation in their miſery; the rich and powerful of the only curb to their paſſions; they tear from the heart the remorſe of the criminal, and the hope of the virtuous; yet boaſt that they are the benefactors of human kind. Never, ſay they, is truth prejudical to man;

—I agree with them, and therefore, it is a great proof, in my opinion, that what they say is not the truth.

THE GOSPEL.

THIS divine book, the only one neceſſary to a Chriſtian, and the moſt uſeful of all, to thoſe even who are not, only requires being meditated, to inſpire the ſoul with love for its Author, and a deſire to accompliſh his precepts. Never did virtue ſpeak in more perſuaſive language! never did the moſt perfect wiſdom explain itſelf with ſo much energy and ſimplicity. It is impoſſible to read it without feeling ourſelves better for the peruſal. The majeſty of the language ſurpriſes me; the holineſs of the goſpel ſpeaks to my heart. Obſerve the books of the philoſophers with all their pomp; how inſignificant do they appear on a compariſon with this? Is it poſ-

ſible

ſible, that a book, which is at once ſo ſublime, and ſo wiſe, ſhould be the work of man? Is it poſſible that he, of whom this hiſtory is written, was himſelf but a man? Is that the ſtile of an enthuſiaſt, or an ambitious ſectary? What ſweetneſs! what purity of morals! what affecting graces in his inſtructions! what elevation in his maxims! what profound wiſdom in his diſcourſes! what preſence of mind! what ingenuity and juſtneſs in his replies! what command of his paſſions! Where is the man, where is the philoſopher, who could act, ſuffer, and die, without weakneſs, or without oſtentation? When Plato drew the character of his imaginary juſt man, overwhelmed with all the ignominy of vice, and intitled to the full reward of virtue;

tue; he painted every trait of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. The reſemblance was ſo ſtriking, that all the fathers felt it; it was impoſſible to be deceived in it. How prejudiced, how blind muſt he be, who could dare to compare the ſon of Sophronious with the ſon of Mary? What a difference between them! Socrates dying without ſorrow, without reproach, eaſily ſuſtained his character to the end; and if this eaſy death had not reflected credit on his life, it is dubious, whether Socrates, with all his intelligence, was better than a ſophiſt. He deviſed, they ſay, a ſyſtem of morality; others before him had put it in practice; he only ſaid what they had performed: he only compoſed precepts from their example. Areſtides was juſt before Socrates deſcribed

ſcribed juſtice; Leonidas died for his country before Socrates made patriotiſm a virtue; the Spartans were ſober before Socrates praiſed ſobriety; and before he applauded virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But whence from among his people did Jeſus draw that morality ſo pure and elevated, of which he alone gave the precepts and example? In the heart of the moſt furious fanatiſm, did he make the voice of the moſt exalted wiſdom heard, and the ſimplicity of the moſt heroic virtues honoured the loweſt of all the people. The death of Socrates, quietly moralizing amidſt his friends, is the eaſieſt that could be deſired: that of Jeſus expiring in torments, injured, inſulted, and curſed by a whole people, the moſt terrible that could be dreaded.

dreaded. Socrates taking the poiſoned cup, bleſſes thoſe who preſent it to him weeping: Jeſus, in the anguiſh of his tortures, prays for his exaſperated tormentors. If the life and death of Socrates ſpeak a philoſopher, the life and death of Jeſus mark a God. It has been argued, that the hiſtory of the Goſpel was a deſigning invention: it is not thus that people invent; and the actions of Socrates, which were never diſputed, are leſs powerfully atteſted than thoſe of Jeſus Chriſt. Upon the whole, it is raiſing difficulties, without deſtroying the fact. It is much more inconceivable, that many men ſhould have agreed together to form the book, than that one alone ſupplied the ſubject. Never have we met in any Jewiſh writers

ſuch

ſuch a ſtile, ſuch a moral; and in the goſpel, the characters of truth are ſo great, ſo ſtriking, that the inventor would be more wonderful than even the hero.

The principles of chriſtianity form an univerſal religion, which has nothing excluſive, nothing local, nothing that is more adapted to one people than another. The divine Author embracing equally all men in his boundleſs charity, came to remove the barrier between nation and nation, and to re-unite all the human race in one community of brethren *. "But in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him." Such is the true ſpirit of the goſpel, &c.

* Acts, x. v. 35.

I know

I know not why the fine morality of our books ſhould be aſcribed to the progreſs of philoſophy; the morality drawn from the goſpel was chriſtian before it was philoſophical. The precepts of Plato are frequently very ſublime; but how erroneous are they ſometimes, and how far do not thoſe errors extend? As to Cicero, is it poſſible to believe, that without Plato he would have deviſed his Offices? The goſpel alone, in reſpect to the moral, is always ſure, always true, always uniform, and always like itſelf.

PRAYER, DEVOTION, AND DEVOTEES.

THE ſoul, in elevating itſelf in prayer to the ſource of its ſentiment and being, loſes its avidity and languor; it is revived, re-animated; it acquires new life, new vigour, a new exiſtence, in which the corporal paſſions have no ſhare; or rather, it is no longer connected with itſelf; it is loſt in the contemplation of the Eternal Being, and diſengaged for a while from the fetters of mortality; it is conſoled in reſuming them, by this ſpecimen of a more ſublime ſtate which it hopes one day to enjoy.

There is nothing that may not be carried to a blameable exceſs; even religion, when it becomes extravagant.

gant. From whence ariſes the extacies of fanatics? From prolonging the time of prayer beyond what the weakneſs of human nature admits. Hence the mind is exhauſted; the imagination inflamed, and produces viſions: thence fanatics conceive themſelves inſpired; they propheſy; and thus, even ſenſe and genius can no longer enſure their poſſeſſor from religious phrenſy.

Whenever we abuſe the uſe of prayer, and become myſterious, we loſe ourſelves in attempting to elevate our ſouls; in the ſearch of grace, we loſe ſight of reaſon; to obtain one gift from heaven, we loſe another; in obſtinately ſeeking to be more enlightened, we are deprived of the light given to us.

To ſerve God, it is not required that we ſhould paſs our lives on our knees; it is required that we ſhould firſt perform the duties he has enjoined, by doing, in ſubmiſſion to his pleaſure, every thing becoming the ſtation in which he has placed us; and when we have performed the duties of our ſituation, we may devote as much of our time as can be done with attention, to prayer.

Devotion is the opium of the ſoul: it enlivens, animates, and ſuſtains, when properly taken; but when made uſe of too largely, it either numbs our faculties, renders us furious, or totally deſtroys what it was meant to invigorate.

We ſhould never ſet up devotion by an affected exterior, as an employment that diſpenſes from every other; it

it is alſo neceſſary to avoid myſterious and metaphorical language, which encourages the chimeras of the imagination, and ſubſtitutes in the place of a true and uniform piety, ſentiments which are imitative of a terreſtrial love, and ſuch as are calculated to awaken it. Thoſe who poſſeſs a tender heart and lively imagination, ſhould be particularly cautious to avoid what tends to raiſe them; for how can they ſeparate the connection of a myſtical and ſenſual object; and how can a good woman venture to contemplate with confidence, objects ſhe dare not behold?

That which occaſions the moſt eſtrangement in devotees by profeſſion, is their ſyſtem of morality; that renders them inſenſible to humanity; it is their exceſſive pride that makes

them look down with pity on the reſt of mankind. In their elevation, if they condeſcend to perform ſome act of goodneſs, it is in a manner ſo humiliating, they pity others in ſo cruel a tone, their juſtice is ſo rigid, their charity ſo rough, their zeal ſo bitter, their contempt ſavours ſo ſtrongly of hatred, that even the inſenſibility of worldly people is leſs intolerable than their commiſſeration. Their love of the divinity ſerves them as an excuſe for not loving any human being; they do not even love one-another. Is true friendſhip ever ſeen among theſe (falſe) devotees? The more they detach themſelves from their fellow creatures, the more they exact from them; it ſhould ſeem that they elevate themſelves to God, only to exerciſe his authority upon earth.

SUPERSTITION.

SUPERSTITION is the moſt dreadful ſcourge of human nature; it brutalizes the ſimple, perſecutes the wiſe, and involves whole nations. It occaſions every where innumerable evils; what good does it produce? none; if it does, it is only to tyrants; it is their moſt terrific weapon; and that of itſelf is the greateſt evil it has ever done.

CONSCIENCE.

CONSCIENCE is the firſt of all caſuiſts. It is only when we would traffic with it, that we have recourſe to the ſubtilty of argument.

Conſcience is the voice of the ſoul; the paſſions are the voice of the body. Is it to be wondered at, that theſe two languages are frequently in oppoſition to each other; and which in that caſe ſhould we attend to? Too often does our reaſon deceive us. Too much have we acquired the right of challenging it; but conſcience never deceives us; it is the unerring guide of man; it is to the ſoul, what inſtinct is to the body; thoſe who follow it, obey the

the dictates of nature, and are not apprehenſive of being led aſtray.

Oh conſcience! conſcience! divine inſtinct, immortal and celeſtial voice, ſafe guide of a being ignorant and bounded, but intelligent and free, infallible judge of good and evil, that renders man like unto God! it is thou that formeſt the excellence of his nature, and the morality of his actions. Without thee, I feel nought within that elevates me beyond the brutes; but the melancholy privilege of wandering from error to error, by the help of an underſtanding without a guide, and reaſon without a principle.

If conſcience ſpeaks to every heart, wherefore are there ſo many who liſten to it? It is, becauſe it ſpeaks the language of nature, which every

every thing has contributed to make us forget.

Conſcience is timid; it loves peace and retirement; noiſe, and the hurry of the world, alarm it; the prejudices from whence they derive it, are its moſt cruel enemies; it flies, or is ſilent before them; their bluſtering noiſe ſtifles and prevents its being heard; fanaticiſm has dared to counterfeit it, and to ſuggeſt crimes in its name. At length, from being ſo often repulſed, it is totally diſcouraged; it no longer ſpeaks, it no longer anſwers us; and having experienced ſuch contempt, it is as difficult to recall, as to baniſh it.

THE MORALITY OF OUR ACTIONS.

ALL the morality of our actions conſiſts in the judgment we ourſelves have of them. If it is true, that good is good, it ſhould be at the bottom of our hearts, as in all our works; and the chief worth of juſtice, is to feel that we practiſe it. If moral goodneſs is conformable to our nature, man cannot be found in mind, or well modulated, but in proportion as he is good. If it is not, and man is naturally wicked, he cannot ceaſe to be ſo, without corruption; and his goodneſs is in that caſe only a ſin againſt nature. Formed to injure his fellow creatures, as a wolf to devour his prey, a humane man would be as depraved

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an animal, as a compaſſionate wolf; and the practice of virtue would alone be the ſource of remorſe.

Let us examine ourſelves, all perſonal intereſt apart, to what our propenſities moſt incline us. What object is the moſt delightful to us, the happineſs or miſery of others? Which charms us the moſt in performing, and leaves the moſt agreeable impreſſion, after having performed it—an act of benevolence, or of wickedneſs? For whom do we intereſt ourſelves in theatrical repreſentations? Is it in crimes that we take pleaſure; is it for the puniſhment of their perpetrators, that we drop a tear? Every thing, it is ſaid, is indifferent to us, that is independent of our intereſts; and on the contrary, the ſweetneſs of friend-

ſhip,

ſhip, of humanity, conſoles us in our pains, and is a relief even in our pleaſures.

We ſhould be lonely, miſerable, without ſomebody to participate them. If there is no morality in the heart of man, from whence ariſes thoſe tranſports of admiration for great ſouls? that enthuſiaſtic admiration of virtue,—what connection has it with our private intereſts? Wherefore would I rather be Cato, who deſtroyed himſelf, than Cæſar, who triumphed? Take from the heart this admiration of what is excellent, and you take away what conſtitutes the principal charm of our exiſtence. Thoſe, in whoſe narrow hearts the paſſions have ſtifled theſe delicious ſentiments; thoſe, who concentering all their feelings in ſelf, are arrived

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the point of loving only themſelves, have no longer any tranſports; their inſenſible hearts no longer palpitate with joy; their eyes never ſhed the ſweet tears of tenderneſs and ſenſibility; they no longer enjoy any thing! Unhappy beings, who no longer feel, no longer live, no longer taſte, what alone makes life deſirable! View all the nations of the world; ſurvey all hiſtory, amidſt ſo much ſtrange and barbarous worſhip, amidſt ſuch prodigious diverſity of morals and characters, you will find every where the ſame idea of honeſty and juſtice; every where the ſame notions of good and evil. The ancient Pagans worſhiped Gods ſo abominable, that they would have been puniſhed as profligates on earth, and who preſented as emblems of ſupreme happineſs,

happineſs, only the commiſſion of crimes, and the gratification of paſſions. But vice, though inveſted with ſacred authority, deſcended in vain from the eternal abode; moral inſtinct repulſed it from the heart of man. While they celebrated the debauches of Jupiter, they admired the continence of Xenocrates; the chaſte Lucretiæ worſhiped the unchaſte Venus; the intrepid Roman ſacrificed to fear; he invoked the God who maimed his father, and died without a murmur by the hands of his own. The moſt wretched Gods were worſhiped by the greateſt men. The ſacred voice of nature, ſtronger than that of the Gods, commanded reſpect on earth, and ſeemed to baniſh from Heaven the crime and the criminal.

It is therefore evident, that there is, in the bottom of our ſouls, an innate principle of juſtice and virtue, on which, in ſpite of our peculiar actions, we judge of the good and evil of our own actions, and thoſe of others.

OF MORAL AND PHYSICAL EVIL.

IT is the abuſe of our faculties that renders us wicked and unhappy. Our griefs, our cares, our troubles, all originate from ourſelves. Moral evil is inconteſtibly our own work; and phyſical evil would be nothing without our vices that made us ſuſceptible. Is it not for our preſervation, that nature makes us ſenſible of our wants? When we feel pain, is it not a proof that the frame is deranged, and a warning to provide againſt it?

If we would content ourſelves with being what we are, we ſhould not have occaſion to lament our fate; but, in ſeeking imaginary good, we produce to ourſelves a thouſand

real evils. Thoſe who cannot ſupport ſmall ſufferings, have a great deal to ſuffer. When the conſtitution is ſpoiled by a diſorderly life, remedies are ſought to re-eſtabliſh it. To the evil that is felt, is added that which is feared; the foreſight of death renders it terrible, and accelerates it; the more we would fly it, the more we feel it; and ſuffer a living death, in murmuring againſt nature for the evils which are brought on by abuſing it.

Oh man! man! ſeek no longer for the author of evil! that author is thyſelf! There is no evil but what you commit, or you allow; and both one and the other originate from yourſelf. General evil can only be produced by irregularity; and in the ſyſtem of the world, I perceive a regularity

gularity that never fails. Particular evil is only in the opinion of the being that ſuffers; and this opinion man did not derive from nature; he derived it from himſelf. Grief has ſmall power over thoſe who, having reflected little, have neither recollection or foreſight. Take from us our fatal refinements, our errors, our vices; take from us what is the work of man, and all will be found good.

OPTIMISM.

I BELIEVE we cannot properly examine the ſyſtem of optimiſm, without carefully diſtinguiſhing the particular evil, of which none of the philoſophers have denied the exiſtence, from the general evil that is denied by the optimiſt. The queſtion is not whether we all ſuffer or not; but if it was right that the univerſe ſhould exiſt, and if our ſufferings were inevitable in the compoſition of the world. Hence the addition of an article, it appears to me, would render the propoſition more exact; and inſtead of ſaying, *all is right*, it would be better to ſay, *the all is right*, or *the all is right for the all.* Thence it is very evident, that no man is able to

to give direct proof either for or againſt; for this proof depends on a perfect knowledge of the compoſition of the world, and the deſign of its author; and this knowledge is indiſputably beyond the intelligence of man. The true principles of optimiſm cannot be drawn either from the properties of matter or the mechaniſm of the univerſe, but only by an inference of the perfection of God, who preſides over all; ſo that the exiſtence of God is not proved by the ſyſtem of Pope, but the ſyſtem of Pope, by the exiſtence of God; and it is indiſputable, that from the queſtion of Providence, is derived that of the origin of evil. If one of theſe queſtions have been better treated than the other, it is becauſe there has been ſuch bad reaſoning on the ſub-

ject of Providence; and that the abſurd things which have been ſaid, have greatly embroiled all the concluſions that might be drawn from this great and conſoling doctrine.

Thoſe who have principally contributed to injure the cauſe of religion, are the prieſts and devotees, who will not permit of every thing being done according to the order eſtabliſhed, but aſcribe the moſt natural occurrences to the interference of divine juſtice; and to be ſure of their purpoſe, chaſtiſe and puniſh the bad, try and reward the good with bleſſings and misfortunes indiſcriminately according to the event.

For my part, I know not whether it is good theology; but I think it a bad way of reaſoning, to ground the proof of Providence indifferently

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on what makes for or againſt us, and to attribute to him, without diſcrimination, all that is done equally without his intervention.

Nor do the philoſophers appear to me to be much more reaſonable, when I ſee them accuſe Heaven, becauſe they are impatient in ſuffering. They exclaim, all is loſt, if they have the tooth-ach; if they are poor, or if they are robbed, and charge the Almighty, as Seneca ſays, with the care of their portmanteau. If ſome tragical accident had deſtroyed Cartouch or Cæſar, in their infancy, it would have been ſaid, What crimes have they committed? Thoſe two robbers lived, and we ſay, why were they ſuffered to remain upon earth? On the contrary, a devotee would ſay, in the firſt inſtance, God took

away the child as a puniſhment to the parent; and in the ſecond, God preſerved the child for a puniſhment to the people. Hence, whichever part Nature took, Providence would ſtill have been right in the opinion of the devotees, and always wrong in that of the philoſophers, when perhaps it was, in the order of earthly things, neither right or wrong, becauſe all depends on the general law, and that there is no exception for any body. It is moſt probable, that the great Director of the univerſe does not interfere in particular events; that his providence is only univerſal; that ſatisfied with the preſervation of forms and ſpecies, he does not intereſt himſelf concerning the manner in which each individual paſſes the ſhort term of his exiſtence. Does a

wiſe

wiſe monarch, who is ſolicitous for the happineſs of all his ſubjects, think it neceſſary to enquire if the inns are good in his dominions? The traveller murmurs for a night when they are bad, and laughs the reſt of his days at his miſplaced impatience. *Commorandi enim. Natura diverſorium nobis, non habitandi dedit.*

To judge properly in reſpect to this, it appears to me, that things ſhould be conſidered relatively in the phyſical, and abſolutely in the moral order; ſo that the higheſt idea I can form to myſelf of Providence is, that each material being is diſpoſed in the beſt poſſible manner for the advantage of the whole, and every intelligent and ſenſible being in the manner moſt conducive to their own advantage; which in other words is

ſaying,

ſaying, that to thoſe who feel their exiſtence, it is happier to be than not to be; but this rule muſt be applied to the whole term of a man's exiſtence, and not to any particular period of it, which evinces the relation of Providence with the immortality of the ſoul, in which I am ſo happy as to believe.

If I bring theſe various queſtions back to their common principle, it ſeems to me they have all a relation to that of the exiſtence of God. If God exiſts, which it is impoſſible to doubt, he is perfect; if he is perfect, he is powerful, wiſe, and juſt; if he is powerful and wiſe, all is good; if he is juſt and powerful, my ſoul is immortal; if my ſoul is immortal, thirty years exiſtence are nothing for me, and are, perhaps, neceſſary in the order of the univerſe.

THE PASSIONS.

THE ſource of our paſſions, the origin, and principle of all of them, the only one born with man, and which never quits him during life, is the love of himſelf: a paſſion primitive, innate, and prior to all the others, and of which, in one ſenſe, all the others are only modulations.

The human underſtanding owes much to the paſſions; and they, as is univerſally acknowledged, owe much to the underſtanding. It is by their operation that our reaſon is perfected; we only ſeek information from a deſire of enjoyment: and it is impoſſible to conceive wherefore a being, without deſire or fear, ſhould be at the trouble of reaſoning.

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The paſſions, in their turn, derive their origin from our wants, and their progreſs from our knowledge; for we can neither deſire or fear objects but from our ideas of them, or from the ſimple impulſe of nature.

It is erroneous to make a diſtinction between the paſſions, by ſuppoſing ſome are permitted while others are forbid; that we may give ourſelves up to ſome, and reject the others. All are good when we have them in ſubjection; all are bad when we ſuffer them to have dominion over us.

Nature forbids us to extend our attachments beyond our ſtrength; reaſon to wiſh for what we cannot obtain, and conſcience, not the being tempted, but the ſuffering ourſelves to be overcome by temptation. It does not depend on us to have paſ-

ſions,

ſions, or to be without them; but it depends on us to keep them within proper bounds.

All the feelings that we govern, are proper; all that govern us, are criminal.

When the great paſſions are called forth, we become diſguſted with the others; the peaceful ſenſation that ſucceeds, is the only ſentiment that increaſes by enjoyment.

One of the moſt dangerous objects that can be offered to the view of children, is the operation of violent paſſions of any kind. Theſe paſſions, in their exceſs, have always ſomething puerile that amuſes, ſeduces, and makes them love what they ought to fear. This is the reaſon that we are fond of theatrical repreſentations,

ſentations, and many of us of novels and romances.

All great paſſions are formed in ſolitude; we do not find any thing like them in the world, where no object has poſſeſſion of our minds long enough to make a deep impreſſion; and where the variety of inclinations enervates the force of feeling.

The little paſſions are never deceived; they always have their courſe; but we may arm the great ones againſt themſelves.

In retirement, we ſee and feel differently from what we do in our intercourſe with the world. The paſſions modulated differently, have alſo a different expreſſion; the imagination always ſtruck by the ſame objects, is affected in a more lively manner.

manner. The ſmall circle of images that preſent themſelves continually, mingle with all the ideas, and give that ſtrange and unvaried turn, ſo obvious in the diſcourſe of thoſe who ſeclude themſelves. Does it follow thence, that their diſcourſe is energetic? Not at all; it is only extraordinary; it is in the world that we learn to ſpeak with energy; firſt, becauſe we think it neceſſary to expreſs ourſelves differently from, and better than others; and next, by being obliged continually to affirm what we do not believe; to explain ſentiments we do not feel, we endeavour to give a perſuaſive turn to what we ſay; that ſupplies the place of internal conviction. Does a truly paſſionate lover expreſs himſelf in the ſtrong and lively manner, that

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is ſo much admired in our French dramas and novels? No: the paſſion, full of itſelf, expreſſes itſelf with more abundance than ſtrength; it does not even ſeek to perſuade, for it does not ſuppoſe itſelf liable to ſuſpicion. When a lover expreſſes what he feels, it is leſs from a deſire to make a diſplay of his paſſion, than to relieve himſelf. Love is painted with moſt animation in great cities; but is it more ſenſibly felt there than in cottages?

Read a love letter compoſed by an author in his cloſet; by a wit who wiſhes to ſhine; from the fire of his imagination his letter will be ſo animated, as that the lines may be ſaid almoſt to burn the paper on which they are written; but the fire goes no farther. We are enchanted, even

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agitated perhaps, but the agitation is barren and temporary; it leaves only words on the memory. On the contrary, a letter that is really dictated by love, will be unconnected, diffidifuſive, prolix, replete with tautology. The heart of the writer poſſeſſed by one ſentiment which perpetually occupies it, repeats always the ſame things, and never finiſhes; like a rapid ſpring, that flows inceſſantly, and is never exhauſted. No lively ſallies, nothing remarkable; we remember neither the expreſſions, turns, or ſentences; we find nothing to admire, nothing that ſtrikes us; but nowithſtanding, we feel our hearts affected; we are moved without knowing wherefore; if the force of the ſentiments do not ſtrike, the truth touches us, and thus it is that heart

ſpeaks to heart. But thoſe who do not feel, thoſe who have only the made up jargon of the paſſions, have no reliſh for theſe beauties, and deſpiſe them.

Weak minds ſcarcely ever produce great paſſions.

When the heart opens itſelf to the paſſions, it then becomes ſuſceptible to the diſquietudes of life.

When the paſſions have poſſeſſion of the heart, they help us to ſupport the torments they occaſion. Hope ever accompanies deſire. While we deſire, we diſpenſe with preſent happineſs; becauſe we are ſtill in expectation of it; if it does not come, hope is prolonged, and the charming illuſion continues as long as the paſſion which gave it birth. Thus the ſtate is ſufficient for itſelf, and even

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the diſquiet which it occaſions, is a ſort of enjoyment that ſupplies the place of the real attainment.

Great paſſions are generally ſtifled, they are ſeldom refined.

We can only command paſſion by paſſion. It is by their power, that we combat their tyranny; and it is to nature we muſt apply for the means by which we are to regulate them.

How credulous do the paſſions make us; and how reluctantly does a heart ſtrongly affected, diſengage itſelf from the errors which it is even ſenſible of.

Some people live longer than others, in the ſame number of years, by gaining knowledge from experience. The paſſions are in that caſe

the path that conducts to philoſophy.

The paſſions that we partake ſeduce us; thoſe which oppoſe our intereſts we renounce, and by a falſe concluſion drawn from them, we blame in others what we wiſh to imitate. The ſource of every paſſion is ſenſibility; the imagination determines their bent. Every being that is ſenſible of the nature of the relations appertaining to him, ought to be alarmed when theſe relations are impaired, and he ſuppoſes, or believes he ſuppoſes, others are more ſuitable to his nature. It is the errors of the imagination that transform the paſſions of limited beings, (and even of angels, if they have them) into vices; for they ſhould be informed of the nature

nature of all beings, to know what relations are moſt conformable to their own.

This is the ſummary of all human wiſdom in the uſe of the paſſions: firſt, To feel the true relations of man, as much in reſpect to the ſpecies, as to the individual. Secondly, To diſpoſe the affections of the mind according to theſe relations.

HAPPINESS.

WE do not know what abſolute happineſs or miſery is; every thing is mixed in this life; we taſte no pure ſenſations, we do not remain two minutes in the ſame ſtate. The affections of the mind, like the modulations of the body, are continually fluctuating. Good and evil are common to all but in different proportions. The happieſt are thoſe who ſuffer the feweſt pains; the moſt unhappy thoſe who taſte the feweſt pleaſures. There is always more to ſuffer than to enjoy; this is the difference common to all. The felicity of man in this life is, therefore, only negative; he ſhould meaſure

ſure it by his having the ſmalleſt proportion of misfortunes to ſuffer.

Every ſenſation of pain is invariably accompanied by a deſire of relief. Every idea of pleaſure is inſeperable from the deſire of enjoying it. All deſire implies privation; and every privation we are ſenſible of, is painful. Our miſery, therefore, proceeds from the diſproportion of our deſires and faculties. A ſenſible being, whoſe faculties equaled his deſires, would enjoy perfect happineſs. In what then conſiſts human wiſdom, or the means of acquiring true happineſs? It is not exactly in leſſening our deſires; for, if they were within our powers, a part of our faculties would remain inactive, and we ſhould not enjoy the whole of our exiſtence. Neither does it conſiſt in extending

our faculties; for, if our desires were extended at once in more enlarged connection, we should only become more miserable; but it consists in diminishing all of our desires that are beyond our faculties, and thus having our desires and faculties in a perfect equilibrium, it is then alone, that all the powers being in action, the soul notwithstanding remains at peace, and man finds himself properly constructed.

'Tis thus that Nature who orders every thing in the best manner originally appointed him. She gave him, immediately, only the desires necessary for his preservation, and faculties sufficient to satisfy them. She placed the others, as a reserve, in the recesses of his soul, to unfold themselves when required. It is only

in this primitive ſtate that the equilibrium of will and power meet, and that man is not unhappy. As ſoon as his virtual faculties are called into action, his imagination, the moſt active of all, awakens and outruns them. It is our imagination that extends the meaſures of poſſibility, whether of good or evil, and conſequently excites and encourages our deſires by the hope of ſatisfying them; but the object which appears at firſt ſight to be within our reach, flies faſter than we can purſue; and when we think we have obtained it, takes another form, and ſhews itſelf only at a diſtance. No longer viewing the ground we have gone over, we conſider it as nothing, that which remains to go over, enlarges and extends inceſſantly: hence we are exhauſted

hauſted without arriving at the goal; and the more we gain on the ſide of enjoyment, the farther happineſs retires from us. On the contrary, the nearer man keeps to his natural ſtate, the leſs is the difference between his deſires and his faculties, and conſequently the nearer he is to happineſs. He is never leſs miſerable than when he ſeems deprived of every thing; for miſery does not conſiſt in the privation of things, but in feeling the want of them.

The real world has its bounds, the imaginary one is infinite; ſince we cannot enlarge the one, let us contract the other; for it is from their difference alone that ariſes all the troubles which makes us truly unhappy. Take away health, ſtrength, and the teſtimony of a good conſci-

ence,

ence, all the bleſſings of this life are in opinion. Take away bodily pain, and remorſe of conſcience, and all our evils are imaginary.

Every animal has exactly the faculties neceſſary for his preſervation; man alone has a ſuperfluity. Is it not extraordinary that this ſuperfluity ſhould be the ſource of his miſery? In every country the arm of a man is able to provide more than enough for his ſuſtenance, if he were wiſe enough not to make uſe of the ſuperfluity, he would always have what was neceſſary, becauſe he would never have too much. Favarin ſays, that great wants ſpring from great poſſeſſions, and that often the beſt method of procuring what is wanting to us, is to deprive ourſelves of what we have: it is by dint of diſquieting

ourſelves

ourſelves to augment our happineſs, that we become miſerable. If man ſought only to live, he would live happy, and conſequently be virtuous; for what advantage would accrue to him from being wicked?

The moſt convincing proof of a truly contented mind, is a retired and domeſtic life; for it is evident, that thoſe who are inceſſantly in ſearch of happineſs abroad, have it not within themſelves.

We judge too much of happineſs by appearances; we ſuppoſe it to be, where, in fact, there is leaſt of it; and ſeek it where it cannot be found. Mirth is but a very equivocal proof of it. The gayeſt men are often diſſatisfied beings, who ſeek to deceive others, and to ſhake off their own thoughts. Thoſe who are ſo lively,

lively, ſo frank, ſo eaſy in company, are generally peeviſh and moroſe at home; their domeſtics ſuffer for the chearfulneſs and good humour they diſplay in ſociety. A truly contented being is neither gay or frolicſome. Jealous of the ſweet and peaceful ſenſation, they dwell on it, they enjoy it, they fear it ſhould evaporate. A truly happy man does not talk much, he does not laugh much, but confines, as it were, his felicity within his heart.

Noiſy jeſts, and boiſterous mirth, are only the veil of diſcontent and wearineſs; diſcontent is the companion of voluptuouſneſs. Softneſs, tenderneſs, and tears, accompany the ſweeteſt enjoyments; and exceſſive joy itſelf, more frequently excites tears than ſmiles.

If,

If, upon a firſt view, a multiplicity and variety of amuſements appear to contribute to happineſs; if the uniformity of a domeſtic and and regular life, appears at firſt productive of ennui; in examining them more accurately, we find, on the contrary, that the moſt pleaſing ſtate of mind is produced by moderate enjoyments, which leave little room for deſires or diſguſt. The reſtleſsneſs of deſire produces curioſity and inconſtancy; tumultuous pleaſures are ſucceeded by a void that produces ennui.

We are pleaſed when we deſire to be ſo. 'Tis opinion alone that renders all things difficult, that baniſhes happineſs from us; it is infinitely eaſier to be happy, than to ſeem ſo. The ſureſt road to happineſs is virtue;

tue; If we attain it, virtue renders it more pure, more ſweet, more ſolid; if we do not, virtue alone is a ſufficient compenſation.

A ſenſual man indiſcreetly multiplies his ills by voluptuouſneſs; he annihilates, as it were his exiſtence by endeavouring to extend it, he aggravates the weight of his chains by the number of his attachments: he has no enjoyments that do not occaſion him a thouſand bitter privations: the more he feels, the more he ſuffers; the deeper he emerges into life, the more unhappy he is.

Every thing that is connected with the ſenſes, and is not neceſſary to exiſtence, changes its nature as ſoon as it becomes habitual. It ceaſes to be a pleaſure, when it becomes a want; it is at once a chain that we

give

give, and an enjoyment of which we deprive ourſelves; to prevent our wiſhes is not the art of gratifying, but of extinguiſhing them. The nobleſt aim man can propoſe to himſelf is to become maſter of his paſſions, to accuſtom them to obedience, and to confine his wiſhes within their proper bounds. This is a new means of becoming happy; for we only enjoy, without diſquiet, what we ſhould loſe without pain; and, if true happineſs is the portion of the wiſe, it is becauſe Fortune, of all others, can take the leaſt from them.

All conquerors have not been deſtroyed; all uſurpers have not failed in their enterpriſe. Many of them appeared happy to thoſe, whoſe minds were prepoſſeſſed by vulgar opinions;

opinions; but thoſe who, unprejudiced by appearances, judge a man's happineſs by the ſtate of his mind, ſee miſery even in their ſucceſs; ſee their wiſhes and cares (preying on their hearts) extend and increaſe with their fortune. He ſees them loſe breath as they advance, without ever attaining their object; ſees them, like the inexperienced traveller, who the firſt time he aſcends the Alps, ſuppoſes each mountain the laſt he is to encounter; but when he gains the ſummit, diſheartened, ſees ſtill higher mountains before him.

He who could obtain all things, without being omnipotent, would be a very miſerable creature; he would be deprived of the pleaſure of deſiring, the privation of all

others the moſt inſupportable; whence it ariſes, that every monarch who aims at deſpotiſm, aſpires to the honour of dying of laſſitude. Would you know, in all the kingdoms of the earth, who is the moſt uneaſy; ſeek him in the ſovereign, eſpecially if he is very abſolute. What infinite pain do they inflict on themſelves to make others unhappy; cannot they make themſelves miſerable at a leſs expence?

Rogues are always unhappy, becauſe they are always rogues. Kings are always unhappy, becauſe they are always kings. The middling ſtate of life, that of the moſt liberty, the eaſieſt to quit, is productive of the trueſt ſatisfaction; it extends the lights alſo of thoſe who feel it, by giving them more prejudices to examine,

amine, and a greater diverſity of opinions to compare. This appears to me to be the principal cauſe of our generally finding men in a middling ſtation of life, better informed, more ſenſible, and happier than in any other.

While we are ignorant of what we ought to do, the wiſeſt ſtep we can take, is to remain inactive. This is, of all others, the maxim man ſtands moſt in need of, and which he the leaſt obſerves. To ſeek happineſs where it is not to be found, is expoſing ourſelves to fly from it; it is running as many riſks of ſtraying from the road, as there are paths to miſlead. But all the world do not poſſeſs the art of judicious inaction. The uneaſineſs, in which we are kept by the ardor of our

deſire for happineſs, makes us chuſe rather to deceive ourſelves in the purſuit, than not do ſomething towards ſeeking it; and when once we have quitted the place where it might have been found, we can never return.

The ſource of happineſs is not entirely either in the object deſired, or in the heart that poſſeſſes it, but in the connection of both; and as every object is not calculated to produce happineſs, every ſtate of the heart is not calculated to feel it. If the pureſt mind is not alone ſufficient to its own happineſs, it is yet more certain, that all the delights upon earth could not form the felicity of a depraved mind; for there is on each ſide a neceſſary diſpoſition, a certain concurrence, from which reſults

reſults that valuable ſenſation ſo ſought for by every wiſe being, and never known to thoſe ſhort-ſighted mortals, who deſire only the gratification of the preſent moment, becauſe they are unacquainted with permanent happineſs.

Man, would you lead a life of wiſdom and happineſs? attach yourſelf only to thoſe poſſeſſions, which are unperiſhable; contract your deſires to your condition; unite your inclinations with your duties; extend the law of neceſſity to all moral objects; learn to bear, with patience, the loſs of every thing that you are liable to be deprived of; learn to part with every thing, when virtue ordains it; to riſe ſuperior to events; to diſengage the heart, without rending it; to be reſolute in adverſity,

that misfortune may not have the power of making you miſerable; to be firm in your duties, that temptation may not have the power to render you criminal. Then will you be happy, in ſpite of fortune, and wiſe, in ſpite of your paſſions. You will then find, in the enjoyment of even uncertain bleſſings, a voluptuouſneſs, that nothing can diſturb; you will poſſeſs them, without their poſſeſſing you; and you will feel, that the man, whom every thing eſcapes, enjoys only what he knows how to part with. You will not, it is true, have the illuſive pleaſures of the imagination; but, on the other hand, you will not have the afflictions, that are conſequent to them, and you will be an infinite gainer by the exchange; for the afflictions are numerous

merous and inevitable, the pleaſures few and uncertain. Having conquered ſo many fallacious opinions, you will triumph alſo over that which diſturbs the peace of others; you will paſs your life without ſorrow, and die without fear, you will diſengage yourſelf from it as from all other things. That which in reflecting on it, gives horror to others, the end of life, will be to you a ſource of joy, convinced that it is then only, you will begin to live. Death, which concludes the exiſtence of the wicked, is the commencement of life to the juſt.

VIRTUE.

THE word virtue is derived from ſtrength; ſtrength is the baſis of all virtue.

The virtuous man is he who conquers his paſſions.

Virtue belongs only to that being who weak by nature, is ſtrong by will; in this conſiſts the merit of a juſt man.

The exerciſe of the ſublime virtues elevates and animates the genius; the practice of the ſocial virtues extends the love of humanity to the inmoſt receſſes of the heart. It is in doing benevolent actions that we become good; I do not know a more certain means.

Souls

Souls of a certain caſt influence others to a ſimilitude of them; they have a ſphere of action which nothing can reſiſt; it is impoſſible to know, without wiſhing to imitate them, from their ſublime elevation they attract every thing that ſurrounds them.

It is not ſo eaſy to relinquiſh virtue as people imagine: ſhe puniſhes thoſe who abandon her, and her charms, which are the delight of a pure mind, are the greateſt torment of the wicked, who retain the ſenſe of their value, but can no longer enjoy them.

Virtue is ſo neceſſary to the heart, that when the genuine principle is relinquiſhed, we immediately form one according to our own ideas, which we

we adhere to the more firmly, perhaps, from its being our choice.

If the ſacrifices to virtue ſometimes are painful, it is always pleaſing to have made them, we never repent of having acted well.

A mind once corrupted is always ſo; it never reſumes its original purity, unleſs ſome ſudden revolution, ſome great alteration of fortune and ſituation, changes at once all its connections; and by a total revolution of circumſtances, reinſtates it in its former ſituation. A man's habits being changed, his paſſions taking a new biaſs from this univerſal alteration, he ſometimes recovers his original character, and becomes regenerate. Hence the remembrance of his former failure will preſerve him from

from a relapſe. He who was yeſterday abject and weak, is to day magnanimous and reſolute. In comparing theſe ſituations, he feels the value of that which he has regained, and becomes more ſolicitous to preſerve it.

The enjoyments of virtue are all internal, and are only perceptible to him who feels them; all the advantages of vice ſtrike the beholder; and it is only the poſſeſſor who knows how dearly they are purchaſed. This is, perhaps, the cauſe of the fallacious opinions that are imbibed, of the advantages of vice and virtue.

It is animated minds alone that contend and conquer, all great efforts, all ſublime actions proceed from them. The cold reaſoner never performs any thing illuſtrious; we only

triumph

triumph over our paſſions by oppoſing then one againſt the other.

When thoſe which are authoriſed by virtue have the aſcendancy, ſhe alone preſides, and holds all in a juſt equilibrium. Upon this principle does the wiſe man form his conduct. He is no more than others out of the power of the paſſions; but he knows how to conquer them, by themſelves, as a good pilot knows how to ſteer his courſe by unfavourable winds.

Virtue is a ſtate of perpetual warfare; to preſerve it, we have always ſomething to combat within ourſelves.

If life is ſhort in reſpect to pleaſure, how long is it in reſpect to virtue? It is neceſſary to be inceſſantly on our guard. The moments of enjoyment paſs away never to return; the

the opportunities for committing evil offer themſelves continually; a moment's forgetfulneſs loſes us for ever.

Falſe ſhame, and a fear of cenſure, inſpire more bad actions than good ones; but virtue is only aſhamed of what is really bad.

Many who pique themſelves on being virtuous by ſyſtem, are only ſo by temperature, and the varniſh of ſtoiciſm which they give to their actions, conſiſts in aſcribing that to reaſon which is only the effect of choice.

Whoever is more ſtrongly attached to his life than his duties, is not ſolidly virtuous.

A good man ſuſtains with pleaſure the eaſy burden of a life uſeful to his fellow creatures; he feels, what the vain wiſdom of the wicked never permits

mits them to believe; that there is a happineſs in ſtore for the ſole friends of virtue.

It is better to derogate from nobility than virtue: the wife of a collier is more reſpectable than the miſtreſs of a prince.

It has been ſaid, that no man is a hero in the eye of his valet de chambre: that may be; but the man that is juſt, is as much ſo in the eye of his ſervant, as in the opinion of the public, which is a ſufficient proof, that heroiſm is only a deluſive phantom, and that there is nothing ſolid but virtue.

Private virtues are often the more ſublime as they do not aſpire to the approbation of others; but only to the ſecret teſtimony of the heart. The conſcience of the juſt man is more

more valuable to him than the praiſe of the univerſe.

Happineſs is the fortune of the wiſe man, and there is no happineſs without virtue.

HONOUR.

WE may diſtinguiſh in what is called honour, that which is drawn from public opinion, and that which is derived from ſelf-eſteem; the firſt conſiſts in vain prejudices, more changeable than the waves of an agitated ſea; the ſecond has its foundation in the immortal truths of morality.

The honour of the world may be beneficial to the fortune, but it does not penetrate to the heart, and has no influence in any thing that relates to happineſs. True honour, on the contrary, forms the eſſence of it; becauſe, in that alone, we

we find the permanent ſenſation of internal ſatisfaction which alone can render a thinking being happy.

CHASTITY, PURITY, AND MODESTY.

CHASTITY ought to be a very delightful virtue to a beautiful woman, who poſſeſſes an elevated mind. While ſhe beholds all the world at her feet, ſhe triumphs over every thing, and over herſelf; ſhe raiſes a throne in her own heart, where univerſal homage is paid; the reſpectful ſentiments of either ſex, whether tender or jealous; the general eſteem; an approving conſcience, all in a tribute of glory, inceſſantly repay the conflict of a few minutes. The privations are temporary; the reward permanent and eternal. What an enjoyment for a noble mind is the pride of virtue, added to the advantages

tages of beauty; realize the heroine of a romance; she tastes a voluptuousness more exquisite than that of the Lais's and Cleopatra's; and when her beauty is no more, her glory and pleasure still remains; she alone enjoys the past.

Purity is sustained by its own means; the desires always suppressed, cease to revive; temptations only multiply from our yielding to them.

That strength of mind which produces all the virtues, is conected with purity, which nourishes them.

Nothing should be thought beneath our notice that tends to the protection of our purity; for it is small precautions that preserve great virtues.

The desires that are veiled by shame become only the more seduc-

ing; they are inflamed by modeſty. Her fears, evaſions, reſerve, timid acknowledgements, her tender and innocent fineſſe, are more expreſſive of the love ſhe ſeeks to conceal, than if the paſſion had of itſelf ſpoken. 'Tis modeſty that gives value to favours, and ſoftneſs to a refuſal of them. True love poſſeſſes, in fact, what modeſty diſputes with it. The mixture of weakneſs and modeſty renders it more touching and more tender; the leſs it obtains, the more valuable does that become which it does obtain; and, thus, it enjoys at once both its pleaſures and privations.

In vain would vice conceal itſelf in obſcurity; its impreſſion is marked on the countenance of the criminal. The aſſurance of a woman is the certain

tain proof of her guilt; it is becauſe ſhe has two much occaſion for bluſhing, that ſhe ceaſes to bluſh; and if modeſty ſometimes ſurvives chaſtity, what muſt we think of the chaſtity when modeſty itſelf is extinguiſhed.

Enchanting modeſty! ſupreme voluptuoſneſs of love! what charms does a woman loſe when ſhe parts with thee! What pains, did ſhe know the extent of thy empire, would ſhe employ in the preſervation of thee! If not from principle, at leaſt from coquetry. But modeſty is not to be counterfeited. There is nothing ſo ridiculous as the artifice which would imitate it.

COMPASSION AND SENSIBILITY.

COMPASSION is a virtue the more univerſal and uſeful to man, as it precedes in him the uſe of all reflection; and ſo natural, that even the brutes ſometimes give ſtriking proofs of it.

Mandeville was convinced, that, with all their morality, men would have been no better than monſters, if nature had not given them compaſſion in aid of reaſon; but he has not noticed, that, from that ſole quality flows all the ſacred virtues that he would diſpute with man. In fact, what is generoſity, clemency, humanity? if not the compaſſion that is evinced for the weak, the guilty, and human

human nature in general. Benevolence and friendſhip themſelves, are properly conſidered, the effects of a perſevering compaſſion fixed on one object; for, to wiſh that the ſufferings of every one were relieved, what is it elſe but to wiſh them happy?

The compaſſion we feel for an object is not in proportion to the extent of his misfortunes, but to our idea of his ſufferings; we only pity the unhappy according to our opinion of what they feel. It is thus that the heart becomes hardened in reſpect to the ſituation of mankind; that the rich conſole themſelves for the wrongs they are guilty of towards the poor, ſuppoſing them to be ſo inſenſible as not to feel their misfortunes. In general, one may judge of the value

each perſon ſets on the happineſs of his fellow creatures, by the regard they ſhew them. It is natural that they ſhould pay little regard to the happineſs of thoſe they deſpiſe.

It is more natural to the heart of man, to place himſelf in the ſituation of the unhappy, than the fortunate part of mankind.

We pity in others, only thoſe misfortunes from which we ourſelves are not exempted.

Non ignora mali, miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.

I have never met with any thing ſo fine, ſo profound, ſo touching, ſo true, as this verſe: why are monarchs without pity for their ſubjects? Becauſe they do not imagine they ſhall ever become men. Why are the rich ſo unfeeling to the poor? Becauſe

cauſe they are not afraid of becoming ſo. Why have the nobility ſuch a contempt for the common people? 'Tis becauſe a nobleman can never become a mechanic. Wherefore are the Turks in general more humane and hoſpitable than us? It is, that in their government, which is entirely arbitrary, the riches and grandeur of individuals being always precarious and fluctuating, they do not look upon a humble or miſerable ſtate as being foreign to them; the rich to-morrow, may be in the ſituation of thoſe they relieve to-day.

To pity the miſery of others, it is certainly neceſſary we ſhould know it; but we muſt not feel it. When we have ſuffered, or are apprehenſive of ſuffering, we pity thoſe who are unhappy; but while we

actually

actually ſuffer, we have no pity but for ourſelves. Now, if all being ſubjected to the ills of life, no one grants to another, but that pity which he has no immediate occaſion for himſelf. It follows, that compaſſion muſt be a very pleaſing ſenſation, ſince it depoſes in favour of our happineſs; and that, on the contrary, an hard hearted man muſt be always unhappy, ſince the ſtate of his own heart does not leave him any ſuperfluous pity to beſtow on others.

Although compaſſion is the firſt relative ſenſation in the human heart, according to the order of nature, it is not equal in all men; the various impreſſions by which it is excited, have their modulations and degrees, which depend on the particular

ticular character and complexion of each individual. There are ſome leſs general, that are peculiar to hearts of genuine ſenſibility; it is thoſe which ariſe from moral ills, internal grief, affliction, depreſſion, and melancholy.

Some people are only affected by violent expreſſions of grief. The deep and ſilent ſorrow of a diſtreſſed heart, never excites their commiſeration; never does the appearance of a dejected and palid countenance, an eye ſunk by ſorrow, that refuſes the conſolation of a tear, draw one from them. Mental ills make no impreſſion on them, their minds are not ſuſceptible of them. Expect nothing from them but rigour, inflexibility, hardneſs of heart, and cruelty. They may be juſt, and poſſeſſed of integrity;

grity; but they are never generous, kind, or compaſſionate. I ſay, they may be juſt, if, however, a man can be eſteemed juſt, who is not merciful.

Pity is ſweet, becauſe in placing ourſelves in the ſituation of the perſon who ſuffers, we nevertheleſs feel the pleaſure of not ſuffering as he does. Envy is bitter, for the ſight of a happy man; for from making an envious one participate, the ſenſation makes him repine at not being in his place. It ſeems, as if the one exempted us from the ills he ſuffers, and the other would deprive us of the benefits we enjoy.

To prevent compaſſion from degenerating into weakneſs, we muſt make it general, and extend it to all human kind. We ſhall then only

yield

yield to it, when it is consistent with justice, because justice is, of all others, the virtue that conduces most to the general good. We must, therefore, from regard to ourselves, have more compassion for the species than for individuals; and it is a great cruelty towards mankind, to bestow pity on the wicked.

PATRIOTISM.

PATRIOTISM.

THE moſt ſurpriſing inſtances of virtue have been produced by patriotiſm; that ſweet and animated ſenſation, which, adding the powers of ſelf-love to all the beauty of virtue, gives it an energy, which, without disfiguring, renders it the moſt heroic of all paſſions. It is that which produced ſo many immortal actions, the luſtre of which dazzles our weak ſight; and ſo many great men, whoſe antique virtues are looked upon as fables, ſince patriotiſm has been thought ridiculous. As the raptures of tender hearts appear chimerical to thoſe who have never felt them, ſo the love of our coun-

country, (a hundred times more lively and delightful than that of a miſtreſs) can only be conceived by thoſe who have experienced it; but it is eaſy to perceive in all the hearts that it animates, in all the actions it inſpires, that ſublime and burning ardor, which does not ſhine in the pureſt virtues that partake not of it. Let us venture to compare Socrates himſelf with Cato; one was the greateſt philoſopher, the other the beſt citizen. Athens was already loſt, and Socrates had no longer any country but the univerſe; that of Cato was in his heart; he lived only for it, and could not ſurvive it. The virtue of Socrates was that of the wiſeſt of men; but between Cæſar and Pompey, Cato ſeemed a God among mortals. One inſtructed indi-

individual, oppoſed ſophiſtry, and died for the truth. The other defended the ſtate, liberty, and the laws, againſt the conquerors of the world; and at length, when he had no longer a country to ſerve, quitted the earth. A pupil of Socrates, who was worthy of him, would be the moſt virtuous of his cotemporaries; a ſucceſsful emulator of Cato would be the moſt illuſtrious; the virtue of the firſt would form his happineſs; the other would ſeek his, in the happineſs of all. We ſhould be inſtructed by one, and led by the other; and that alone decides where the preference ſhould be given; for never were a whole people made wiſe, but it is not impoſſible to make them happy.

If

If we would have a people virtuous, we muſt begin by making them love their country; but how will they love it, if it is not more favourable to them than to ſtrangers, if it grants to them only what it cannot refuſe to any body? It would be infinitely worſe, if they did not enjoy even the advantages of civil ſecurity; and that their poſſeſſions, their lives, and liberties, were at the diſpoſal of thoſe who had more power, without its being poſſible, or permitted for them, to dare claim the benefit of the laws. Thence ſubjected to the duties of the civil ſtate, without enjoying the rights of the ſtate of nature; and not being empowered to uſe their ſtrength in their own defence, they would conſequently find themſelves

in the worſt ſituation that free people could be placed in; and the idea of their country, far from inſpiring them with ſentiments of glory or pleaſure, would be productive of contempt and deteſtation.

SELF-LOVE.

THERE are two principles which have the ſame denomination, viz. ſelf-love; though no two paſſions of the human mind can be more diſtinct; that ſpecies of ſelf-love which ſignifies the love of ourſelves is a ſentiment natural to man: it is given for his preſervation; and when directed by reaſon, and regulated by pity, produces humanity and virtue. The other principle, which alſo comes under the denomination of ſelf-love, is only a relative ſentiment created and born in ſociety, which incites individuals to procure their own happineſs at the expence of others, and occaſions all the injuries they are

mutually guilty of towards each other, and is the true ſource of honour.

The worſt man is he who concenters all his feelings within himſelf; the beſt, he who divides his affections equally among his fellow-creatures. It is much better even to love a miſtreſs, than to love only one's ſelf; but he who affectionately loves his relations, his friends, his country, and all human kind, degrades himſelf by an illicit attachment, which is prejudicial to the others, as it infallibly obtains the preference of them.

The ſelf-love which is natural, is contented when our real wants are ſupplied; but the artificial ſelf-love which compares itſelf with others is never contented, or ever can be, becauſe this ſentiment, in prefering us

to

to all others in our own opinions, exacts alſo their concurrence in this preference, which is impoſſible. Thus, the ſoft and affectionate paſſions ariſe from the love of ourſelves, and thoſe of a malicious and irraſcible nature from ſelf-love: hence what renders a man eſſentially good is the having few wants, and little propenſity to compare himſelf with others; what renders him eſſentially wicked is having many wants, and too high an opinion of himſelf.

The precepts of the natural law are not founded on reaſon alone, they have a more wiſe and ſolid baſis. The love of mankind, which has its origin in the love of ourſelves, is the principle of human juſtice.

LOVE.

WE may eaſily diſtinguiſh the moral, from the natural, ſentiment in the paſſion of love: the natural ſentiment, is that general deſire which incites each ſex to an union with each other: the moral, that which determines this deſire, and fixes it on one object excluſively, or at leaſt gives to the object preferred, a greater degree of energy. Now it is eaſy to perceive that the morality of love is an artificial ſentiment, manufactured in ſociety, ſupported by cuſtom, and promoted by the female ſex with infinite addreſs and care, to eſtabliſh their empire, and give dominion where obedience is due.

We

We love the image we form much better than the object to whom it is applied; if we were to behold it exactly as it is, there would no longer be any such paſſion as love upon earth; when we ceaſe to love, the object remains the ſame as before; but we no longer view it in the ſame point of view, the illuſive maſk drops off, and love vaniſhes.

The firſt pleaſures are always myſterious; modeſty conceals, and gives them a thouſand new charms, the firſt time a man is ſenſible to love, it does not render him bold, it makes him timid, abſorbed in a ſtate ſo new to him, he retires into himſelf to enjoy it, and trembles to loſe it; if it is oſtentatious, he is neither voluptuous or tender, while he boaſts, he can never enjoy.

True love is the moſt chaſte of all connections; it is this divine ſentiment which purifies our natural propenſities, by concentring them to one object, it is this that caſts temptation from us, and makes the object excepted, one ſex no more to us than the other.

True love is always modeſt; it does not boldly wreſt favours, but timidly ſteals them. Miſtery, ſilence, and almoſt bluſhing fears, augment and conceal the ſoft endearments; the principle that animates it, infuſes reſpect and purity into its careſſes; delicacy and honour accompany it even in the boſom of voluptuouſneſs. 'Tis genuine love alone that can grant every thing to deſire without offending modeſty.

The

The greateſt value of pleaſures ariſes from the heart that beſtows them: a real lover would only feel grief, rage, and deſpair, even in the poſſeſſion of her he loved, if he thought he was not equally beloved.

In ſpite of abſence, privations, alarms, in ſpite of even deſpair itſelf, the ſympathetic attraction of two hearts to each other has always a ſecret tranſport unknown to thoſe who have never felt the ſweet pains of love. It is one of the miracles of love, to make us take a pleaſure in ſuffering; a real lover would look upon a ſtate of indifference or oblivion, that took from him the remembrance of his pains as the moſt cruel misfortune.

Love,

Love, which deſtroys all diſtinction of rank, does not exalt the perſon; it exalts only the ſentiments.

In general, men are leſs conſtant than women; love loſes its charms when it makes them happy; the woman forſees the approaching inconſtancy of her lover, ſhe is uneaſy; from thence ariſes jealouſy, when his affection appears to decline. She, to cheriſh it, repays thoſe attentions, returns that ſolicitude he marked to pleaſe her: ſhe weeps, ſhe humbles herſelf in her turn, but ſeldom with the ſame ſucceſs. Attachment and attentions, gain the heart; but hardly ever recover it when loſt.

How unreaſonable is it in women to deſire to give ſtability to ſo frivolous and tranſient a paſſion as love; every thing in nature changes; all things

things are in a perpetual ſtate of fluctuation, yet they wiſh to inſpire a permanent affection; how can they expect to be loved to day becauſe they were yeſterday? To excite the ſame ſentiment, they muſt preſerve the ſame looks, the ſame diſpoſition, the ſame age; in ſhort, be in every reſpect the ſame: they may then expect that their lovers will remain conſtant to them. But to expect to be inceſſantly loved, when they are inceſſantly changing, is to require a contradiction; it is not ſeeking conſtant hearts, but deſiring they ſhould change as often as they themſelves alter.

The image of true felicity has no longer any charms for man; the corruption of vice has depraved their taſte, as well as their hearts; they no longer

longer ſee what is amiable, or feel what is affecting. Ye, who to paint voluptuouſneſs, repreſent only happy lovers, immerſed in a ſea of pleaſures, how imperfect is your picture! You paint only the coarſeſt ſide, the ſweeteſt attractions are not diſplayed. Who amongſt you have not ſeen a young couple united under happy auſpices, have you not beheld in their chaſte and tender glances, the ſweet tranſports of a pure, animated, and delicate affection, the amiable ſecurity of innocence, and the delight ariſing from a certainty that the reſt of their days will be paſſed together? This is the moſt intereſting object that can be offered to the heart of man; this is the true picture of voluptuouſneſs: ye have ſeen it, but ye have not recognized it; your hearts

hard

hardened by the world, are become inſenſible to the charms of genuine affection.

I cannot conceive why men have ſo little reſpect for women as they evince by daring to addreſs them with inſipid gallantry, ridiculous and inſulting compliments; to which they do not deign to give even an appearance of ſerioufneſs; is not the affronting them with ſuch palpable lies, a ſufficient declaration, that they find no occaſions for ſaying civil or pleaſing truths? That love is founded on the imaginary perfections of its object, happens too often; but there is nothing even like love in this ſlovenly jargon, thoſe who make uſe of it employ it equally to every woman, and they would be miſerable if they were ſuſpected of being ſe-

riouſly

riouſly attached to any one; but they need not be uneaſy on the ſubject, the woman muſt have a ſtrange idea of love to think them capable of it, nothing is more oppoſite to its language than that of gallantry.

From my idea of this terrible paſſion, it ſeems to me, that its cares, its miſtakes, its palpitations, its tranſports, its ardent expreſſions, its ſilence, ſtill more expreſſive, thoſe inexplicable looks, which become hardy even by their timidity, which ſhew their deſire by their fears; it ſeems to me, that after ſuch animated language, if a lover were to ſay, I love you, his indignant miſtreſs would reply, you no longer love me, and would never ſee him more.

There

There is a burning ardor in true love, that communicates itſelf to every other feeling, and animates them with new vigour; hence it is ſaid, that it is love which makes heroes.

The moſt powerful obſtacle to love is having no difficulties to encounter, to be ſupported entirely by itſelf. There never was a paſſion which could ſtand this teſt.

True love has this advantage in common with virtue, that it indemnifies us for the ſacrifices we make to it; and we enjoy, in ſome ſort, the privations that we impoſe on ourſelves by the idea itſelf, of what it coſts us, and the motive which leads us to it.

When mutual happineſs is precluded, to ſeek ours in that of the object

object of our love, is the only conſolation that remains for a hopeleſs lover.

Love is deprived of its greateſt charm, when forſaken by honour; to know all the value of it, the heart muſt be ſatisfied, and in elevating the object of our affection, raiſe us to an equality with it. Take away the idea of perfection, and you deſtroy enthuſiaſm. Take away eſteem, and love is no more. How can a woman eſteem a man who diſhonours her? How can a man reſpect a woman, who gives herſelf up to a vile ſeducer? Hence mutual contempt ſoon takes place of affection; love is no longer any thing but a guilty connection; they will have forfeited honour, without finding happineſs.

While

While we love, we are not entirely unhappy. The image of an extinguiſhed love is more dreadful to an enamoured heart, than even that of an unſucceſsful paſſion; and to feel diſguſt for the object we poſſeſs, a thouſand times worſe than the regret would be of having loſt it.

We only love ſo long as we are beloved; at leaſt not much longer. Thoſe unreturned affections, which, it is ſaid, make ſo many unhappy beings, are only founded in ſenſe; if they are deeply affected, 'tis only by an imaginary ſympathy, in which they are ſoon undeceived. Senſual love is only to be gratified by attaining the object; which attainment extinguiſhes it. True love is only to be ſatisfied by poſſeſſing the heart,

and is as permanent as the ſympathy that gave it birth; when this ſympathy is chimerical, our love laſts no longer than the illuſion from which it aroſe.

There is no paſſion that impoſes ſo much on the underſtanding, as love; we take its violence for a ſign of its duration; the heart, replete with ſo ſweet a ſenſation, extends it in a manner to the future, and while love laſts, we think it will be eternal. But, on the contrary, it is its very ardor that conſumes it; it flies with youth; it declines with the beauty that inſpired it under the influence of age; ſince the commencement of the world, there never has been ſeen two grey headed lovers ſighing for each other. It is certain, that ſome time or other we muſt

muſt ceaſe to love. The idol mutually adored, then deprived of thoſe charms, in which the imagination had adorned it, each ſees the other exactly as they are. They look with aſtoniſhment for the object of their love, and not finding thoſe charms they ſuppoſed, become diſguſted with the reſt; and frequently the imagination is then as aſſiduous in diſfiguring, as it was before in adorning its object. Rochefoucault ſays, there are very few who are not aſhamed of their love, when its influence ceaſes.

If a decayed paſſion weakens the heart, a conquered love gives it with the conſciouſneſs of its victory, a new elevation, and a more animated propenſity towards all that is great and good.

So far is love from being vendible, that the money which is employed to purchaſe, infallibly deſtroys it.

Periſh the unworthy wretch, who bargains for the heart, and renders love mercenary! 'Tis he who fills the world with all thoſe crimes that are the fruit of debauchery.

LOVERS.

THE influence of a bold, inſolent, intriguing woman, who attracts lovers by coquettry, and preſerves them by improper conceſſions, extends only to trifling things, in which ſhe is obeyed with the ſervility of a ſlave, on ſerious and important queſtions, ſhe loſes all her authority. But an amiable, mild, ſenſible woman, who obliges her lovers to reſpect her, who is reſerved and modeſt, ſtrengthening love by eſteem, ſends them from one end of the globe to the other by a look, to war, to glory, to death, wherever ſhe pleaſes. This empire, ſo honourable, ſo flattering, ſeems to me

worth all the pains that can be taken to obtain it.

Brantome ſays, that in the early days of France, a young lady, who had a talkative lover, required of him an abſolute and unlimited ſilence, which he obſerved ſo exactly for two years, that he was ſuppoſed to have loſt his ſpeech by ſome diſorder. One day that they were in a large company, his miſtreſs, who in thoſe days that courtſhip was carried on with more reſerve than it is now, was not known for ſuch, ſaid, ſhe could cure him immediately with one word, which ſhe did by ſaying, *ſpeak*.

Is there not ſomething great and heroic in this love? What could the philoſophy of Pythagoras, with all

all his oſtentation, have produced ſuperior to it? What woman of the preſent age could engage ſuch a compliance from her lover, even for a day, though ſhe were to repay it by her choiceſt ſmiles?

Lovers find a thouſand ways to ſoften the pain of abſence, and to approach each other in a moment; their attraction reſiſts the law of diſtance; they would touch, though placed at different ends of the world. Sometimes they even ſee each other more frequently in abſence, than when they meet daily; for as ſoon as either of them is alone, their ideas bring them together again immediately.

Inconſtancy and love are incompatible; the lover who is ſaid to

change, does not change; he either begins, or ceaſes to love.

The lover who praiſes imaginary perfections in the object of his love, ſees them, in fact, what they appear to him; he is not a flatterer, though he flatters; he deceives, without diſgracing himſelf; and we may eſteem, though we do not believe him.

As the idolator enriches the object of his worſhip with his choiceſt treaſures, the lover, all perfect as he thinks his miſtreſs, is ever ſeeking new ornaments to adorn her; ſhe does not require them to pleaſe him; but it is a ſatisfaction to him to adorn her; it is a new homage that he thinks he is paying her; it is a new intereſt that he gives to the pleaſure of contemplating

plating her. He thinks every ornament miſplaced that does not adorn ſupreme beauty.

FRIENDS

FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP.

NEITHER friendſhip or love are to be purchaſed. We cannot be thoroughly unhappy, however oppreſſed by misfortune, while we can boaſt of a faithful friend.

A good man can never have a better friend than his own wife.

A heart entirely occupied by one overwhelming ſentiment ſeeks to unfold itſelf. A lover feels more ſtrongly, than any other perſon, the want of a friend.

An attachment of love may diſpence with a return; that of friendſhip never can. It is an exchange, a contract, as well as the other, but the moſt ſacred of all. The word friend,

has

has no other correlative than himſelf. Every man that is not the friend of his friend, is moſt certainly a knave; for it is only by returning, or pretending to return it, that friendſhip is obtained.

Nothing has ſo much influence over the human heart, as the voice of friendſhip well underſtood; for we know, that it never ſpeaks but for our advantage. We may believe that a friend is defective in judgment, but never that he means to deceive us: we ſometimes reject his advice, but never deſpiſe it.

Man was never formed for ſolitude, the human heart muſt be aſſociated to make its full value known; and the united force of friends, like that of the blades of an artificial loadſtone, is incomparably greater than the ſum of their individual ſtrength.

ſtrength. Divine friendſhip, this is thy triumph!

The overflowings of friendſhip are reſtrained by a witneſs, whoever he may be; there are a thouſand ſecrets that might be known to three friends, which yet they cannot communicate if more than two are preſent.

It is ſaid the converſation of friends is never at a ſtand; true, the tongue furniſhes words eaſily enough in moderate attachments. But, friendſhip! animated celeſtial ſentiment! What diſcourſe is worthy of thee! What language can do thee juſtice! Never does what we ſay to a friend, equal what we feel, when beſide him. Heavens! what expreſſion in the preſſure of a hand, the animated kindneſs of a look, when we have ſtrained to our boſom the friend of

our

our heart! how cold muſt every word appear by which we would endeavour to explain our affection! Silence, the ſtate of contemplation, is the moſt delightful to men of ſenſibility; but triflers prevent their engaging it; friends require to be alone, that they may enjoy this intereſting ſilence: they wiſh to be collected within themſelves; the leaſt interruption is diſtreſſing to them; the leaſt conſtraint inſupportable. If the heart ſhould wiſh to expreſs its feelings by words, how delightful is it to be at liberty to utter them without reſtraint! It ſeems as if we dared not think, when we dare not expreſs our thoughts; it ſeems as if the preſence of a ſtranger reſtrained the ideas, and compreſſed the

the hearts that would commune ſo pleaſingly without him.

The intercourſe of the heart communicates to grief a ſoft and touching ſenſation that is not known to a ſtate of calm content. Friendſhip was a gift more eſpecially deſigned for the unhappy, as a conſolation to their ſorrow, and a relief to their miſery.

What animation does the voice of friendſhip give to the reaſoning of wiſdom!

There is as great a reſemblance in the ſtile, as in characters of two friends. The ſympathy of their minds communicates itſelf to their manner of thinking, acting, and ſpeaking.

Injudicious conſolations increaſe, inſtead of diminiſhing violent griefs.

Indifference

Indifference and coldneſs eaſily find words; but melancholy and ſilence are the genuine miniſtrations of friendſhip.

We may repel the attack of an enemy; but when we ſee the arm of friendſhip lifted up againſt us, we can only yield in ſilence to the ſtroke.

There is a ſort of circumſpect friendſhip, which, fearing to be called in queſtion, refuſes its advice on difficult occaſions, and increaſes its reſerve in proportion to the danger; but true friendſhip knows not ſuch timid precautions.

Wherefore is it that friendſhip is ſo lukewarm, and of ſuch ſhort duration among women, even thoſe whoſe hearts are formed to love?

It

It is the rivalry of beauty, and their jealouſy of conqueſt that occaſions it.

SENTIMENT.

SENTIMENT.

EVERY thing becomes a ſubject for ſentiment in a heart of ſenſibility. Every object in the univerſe excites in a man of feeling ſenſations of tenderneſs and gratitude. In all he ſees the beneficent hand of the Creator: he gathers his gifts in the productions of the earth; he ſees his table covered by his care; he ſleeps under his almighty protection, and acknowledges, with gratitude, that to him he owes the peaceful ſenſations that attend him in waking; he receives his misfortunes as leſſons, his pleaſures as favours: the bleſſings which are enjoyed by thoſe he loves, are new ſubjects for his homage. If the ſight of the great God of the uni-

verſe is precluded to his feeble ſight, he yet acknowledges him in all his works, as the common parent of mankind. Thus to honour his ſupreme bounties, is the beſt way in which man can ſerve the omnipotent Being. Oh ſentiment! thou charm of life! is there a heart ſo impenetrable as never to have felt thy ſoft influence? Is there a mortal ſo unfortunate as never to have given thee the ſweet tribute of a tear? Thoſe ſcenes of gaiety and pleaſure that are produced by the vivacity of ſentiment, exhauſt nature only for a minute to reanimate it with freſh vigour; theſe ſcenes are never dangerous.

In proportion as we advance in age, every ſentiment becomes concentred; we loſe every day ſomething of what we moſt valued, and it is never replaced.

placed. Thus we die by degrees, till at length loving nothing but ourſelves, we ceaſe to feel, and to live, ere we have ceaſed to exiſt. But a man of ſenſibility exerts all his powers againſt this anticipated death, when he feels the cold ſeize the extremities, he collects about him all his native warmth; the more he loſes, the ſtronger becomes his attachment to what is left, and he is united in a manner to his laſt object, by the ties of all the others.

HUMANITY AND BENEVOLENCE.

HUMANITY is the firſt duty of man; he ſhould exerciſe it towards all men, and every ſituation, there is no wiſdom independent of it.

The occaſions of making people happy are not ſo frequent as it is imagined; the puniſhment of not making uſe of them, is that they never return. If we employ them as we ought, they leave a ſenſation of perpetual ſatisfaction on our minds, while the rejecting them as certainly leaves us an eternal repentance.

It is not money alone that the unfortunate ſtand in need of. Thoſe are a very indolent ſort of benefactors that content themſelves with giving only

only pecuniary relief. Conſolations, advice, attentions, friendſhip, and protection, are the reſources given by pity to ſupply the want of riches, and comfort the unfortunate. Many of thoſe who are oppreſſed are only ſo from not being able to make their miſery known. It depends ſometimes only on a word that they cannot utter, on a reaſon that they know not how to give. The firm ſupport of diſintereſted virtue removes infinite obſtacles, and the eloquence of a good man ſtartles the tyrant in the zenith of his power. If therefore men would be what they ought, they ſhould learn to deſcend to thoſe whoſe ſituations are not ſo happy as their own; humanity, like a pure and ſalutary ſtream, fertilizes the vallies, and ſeeks the plain; it leaves unrefreſhed thoſe

high and dangerous rocks that threaten all beneath them; that either caſt a baneful ſhade, or blaze forth in flames to the deſtruction of each ſurrounding object.

It is only by the continual exercife of benevolence that the beſt hearts can guard againſt the contagion of ambition, by taking a tender intereſt in the misfortunes of others, and witneſſing, "the ills which fleſh is heir to," we avoid the vices that produce them.

If Heaven ſhould deign to attend to the benedictions of mortals, it would not be to thoſe which are offered by ſervility in the preſence of the perſon whom they would flatter, but to thoſe which are implored in ſecret by an artleſs and grateful heart.

A charitable

A charitable man has few opportunities of gratifying his benevolent propenſities in great cities, where his zeal is reſtrained by meeting with continual impoſition.

It is as difficult for a benevolent and feeling heart to be happy while ſurrounded with objects of miſery, as for a virtuous man to preſerve his purity if continually in the ſociety of the wicked. A truly humane man is not ſatisfied with that cruel pity which contents itſelf by a mere expreſſion of compaſſion, and turns away from the miſery it might relieve, he ſeeks the unhappy, that he may conſole and aſſiſt them: it is their feeling miſery, not his ſeeing it, that afflicts him: it is not ſufficient to him that he is ignorant of there being any unhappy objects who may require

his aſſiſtance, it is neceſſary to his peace to be convinced there are not any, at leaſt within his reach; for it would be ridiculous to make his happineſs depend on that of the whole human race.

No virtuous man can want employment while there is a good action to be done, a ſervice which his country requires, to be performed, or a ſuffering fellow creature to be comforted.

The wants moſt ſenſibly felt are thoſe of a benevolent heart, what good man, knowing another has not even the neceſſaries of life, can enjoy its ſuperfluities.

It is the unfortunate alone who feel all the value of a benevolent heart.

NATURE AND HABIT.

NATURE, it has been ſaid, is only habit. What can be meant by this aſſertion? Are there not habits which are contracted only from neceſity, and which never ſuppreſs nature? Such, for inſtance, is the habit of plants, whoſe perpendicular direction is confined, when reſtored to their liberty, though they keep the inclination they have been forced to take, yet the ſap has not thence changed its original direction; and if the plant continues to grow, it will be perpendicularly. It is the ſame with the inclinations of men; while they remain in the ſame ſituation, they preſerve thoſe which ariſe

ariſe from habit, though they ſhould be the leaſt natural to them; but as ſoon as that ſituation changes, habit loſes its influence, and nature reſumes its rights.

We are born ſenſible, and from our birth we are affected in various manners by the objects that ſurround us. As ſoon as we have the conſciouſneſs of our ſenſations, we are diſpoſed to cheriſh or avoid the objects that produce them. Firſt, according as they are agreeable or diſpleaſing to us. Next, according to the conformity or non-conformity of thoſe objects with ourſelves. And, finally, according to the opinion we have on the idea of the happineſs, or the perfection that reaſon gives us. Theſe diſpoſitions extend, and acquire ſtrength in proportion as we become more

ſenſible

ſenſible and more enlightened; but, conſtrained by our habits, they are altered more or leſs by our opinions. Before this alteration, they were what I call nature.

The alteration of habit ariſes from the indolence natural to man; and this indolence augments as we yield to it. It is eaſier to do what has been once done; the road being beaten becomes more eaſy to follow. Habit has moſt power over the old, and indolent, and leaſt over the young and active. The only habit uſeful to children, is to ſubmit without difficulty to the neceſſity of circumſtances. The only habit uſeful to man, is to ſubmit without difficulty to what reaſon enjoins; all other habits are fooliſh or vicious.

VICE.

RIDICULE is the favourite weapon of vice; with theſe arms it attacks the reſpect for virtue implanted in our hearts, and at length totally extinguiſhes our love of it.

There are characters who, bluſhing for their modeſty, become impudent through ſhame; more hearts are corrupted by this falſe ſhame, than by bad inclinations. It is this that firſt introduces vice into a gererous heart, ſtifles the voice of conſcience by public clamour, and repreſſes the reſolution to do right by the fear of cenſure. Inſenſibly we ſuffer ourſelves to be governed by a dread of ridicule; we would rather brave a thouſand

thouſand dangers than one raillery. How injurious to ſociety, to virtue, is this repugnance, which gives a conſequence to the ridicule of people whoſe eſteem can be of no value.

INGRATITUDE.

INGRATITUDE.

INGRATITUDE would not be ſo frequently the ſubject of complaint if uſurious benefits were leſs common, 'tis ſo natural to love thoſe who are kind to us. The heart of man is not ungrateful, though it is ſelf intereſted. We ſeldomer ſee thoſe who have been obliged, ungrateful, than thoſe who oblige them, ſelfiſh. If I purchaſe a benefit, I bargain for the price of it; but if you pretend to beſtow a gift on me, yet in fact make me pay a high price for it, you are guilty of a fraud. The heart receives laws only from itſelf,

thoſe

thoſe who would enſlave diſingage it; 'tis thoſe who leave it at liberty that attack it.

This is the voice of nature; never did a real benefit produce ingratitude.

JEALOUSY.

JEALOUSY.

THE jealouſy that proceeds from love ſeems to be ſo cloſely connected with nature, that we can ſcarcely believe it is not her offſpring. It is inconteſtible, that the averſion we have to whatever diſturbs or oppoſes our pleaſures, is a natural ſenſation, and that, to a certain degree, the deſire of poſſeſſing excluſively what pleaſes, is alſo natural.

Amongſt us, jealouſy has its ſource more in the ſocial paſſions, than in primitive inſtinct. In the generality of connections of gallantry, the lover hates his rivals infinitely more than he loves his miſtreſs.

treſs. If he fears that he ſhall not engage her ſole attention, it is the reſult of ſelf-love; vanity has much more influence over him than love.

It is only in thoſe connections formed by eſteem and ſentiment, that jealouſy is a delicate ſenſation; becauſe, in that caſe, though love is uneaſy, eſteem is permanent, and though it is exacting, it is credulous in the ſame proportion. A lover whoſe paſſion is founded in eſteem, who loves, in his miſtreſs, only ſuch qualities as are valuable to him, is jealous without anger or diſtruſt; he is apprehenſive, and delicate; but he is more alarmed than irritated; he is more ſollicitous to gain his miſtreſs, than to triumph over his rival: he would baniſh him, if

he could, as an obſticle; but he does not hate him as an enemy: he has none of that improper pride which is ridiculouſly offended that any body ſhould dare enter into competition with him; but conceiving that the right of preference is ſolely founded on the ſuperiority of merit, and that honour is engaged in the ſuccefs, he redoubles his attentions to render himſelf amiable, and probably ſucceeds.

VANITY.

THERE is no folly from which a man of ſenſe may not be detached, except vanity; there is no chance for a cure of this, but from experience, and even the power of that is doubtful.

The vanity of man is the ſource of his greateſt torments; there is no perſon ſo perfect, ſo careſſed, but that it is productive of more pain than pleaſure to them. If ever vanity made any body happy, it was, paſt all doubt, a fool.

Vanity breathes only excluſions and preferences, exacts exery thing, and accords nothing; it is ever unjuſt.

HYPOCRISY.

HYPOCRISY is an homage that vice pays to virtue; like that of the aſſaſſins of Cæſar, who proſtrated themſelves at his feet, that they might deſtroy him more effectually. To conceal wickedneſs under the cloak of hypocriſy, is not however doing honour to virtue; it is inſulting by profaning its enſigns; it is adding meanneſs and deceit to all the other vices, and preventing a poſſibility of a return to probity.

There are characters ſo exalted, that the elevation ſhall extend even to their vices, in which we perceive a ſomething ſo noble, ſo generous, as proves, that they ſtill retain ſome ſparks

ſparks of that celeſtial fire formed to animate great ſouls. But the baſe, cringing, and ſervile ſoul of an hypocrite, reſembles a corpſe, in which we no longer find fire, heat, or poſſibility of renovation. I appeal to experience. There are inſtances of the greateſt profligates, who repenting their crimes, have paſſed the remainder of their days in the practice of virtue; but there never was an inſtance of an hypocrite becoming good. The converſion of Cartouch might have been undertaken with a probability of ſucceſs; but no wiſe man would ever have attempted that of Cromwell.

It is only a good man that has the power of forming others. The attempt of an hypocrite, to inſpire a love of virtue, would be fruitleſs;

he could never intereſt or animate any heart in its cauſe; if he knew how to repreſent the charms of virtue, he would love them himſelf.

WICKEDNESS.

THE wicked man is ever fearful; he endeavours to find amuſement by flying from himſelf; he looks with uneaſineſs and jealouſy on every object that ſurrounds him, and is always in ſearch of ſomething to diſſipate his thoughts. He would be melancholy, if deprived of his favourite pleaſures, inſulting raillery, biting ſatire, and the laugh of malice. On the contrary, the ſerenity and peace of a good man is internal; his laugh is not the effect of malice, but of joy. The ſource of it is in himſelf; he is chearful when alone, as when ſurrounded by company; his ſatisfaction is not derived

from thoſe who approach him, but communicated to them.

It is our paſſions that irritate us againſt each other; our intereſts that make us hate the wicked; if they did not injure us, they would excite our pity rather than our animoſity. The injuries that the wicked are guilty of towards us, make us forget thoſe they inflict upon themſelves; we ſhould eaſily forgive them their vices, if we conſidered the puniſhment they carried with them. We feel the offence, but we do not ſee the correction, the advantages are apparent, the chaſtiſement internal. He who flatters himſelf he ſhall enjoy the fruits of his guilt, is no leſs miſerable, than if he had been diſappointed: the object is changed, but his uneaſineſs

is

is the ſame. In vain would he diſplay his fortune, and conceal his heart; his conduct developes the ſtate of it in ſpite of him. It is not neceſſary that we ſhould poſſeſs ſimilar feelings to decide upon this conſequence.

If there ſhould be a man ſo wretched, as never to have done one act in his whole life, the remembrance of which ſhould make him pleaſed with himſelf, and glad to have exiſted, that man would be incapable of knowing himſelf; for want of knowing the goodneſs adapted to his nature, he would neceſſarily remain wicked, and be eternally miſerable.

CHARACTERS.

THERE are minds ſo ſimilar as not to have any marking character; but in thoſe minds a difference is, however, immediately diſcernable. The difficulty of defining this difference, is the cauſe of the diſtinction being confounded by ſuperficial obſervers. It is the very impoſſibility of diſtinguiſhing, that characteriſes them; the traits of their common model, of which ſome are wanting to each individual, ſhines alike in all. Thus each proof of a print has its peculiar defect, which characteriſes it; if we ſhould meet with one that was perfect, we muſt conſider it very attentively to enable us to recollect it.

How

How is it poſſible to ſuppreſs even the weakeſt paſſion, without a counterpoiſe? The inconvenience attending cold and ſedate characters, is, that though all goes well, ſo long as their coldneſs ſhields them from temptation, yet, if one unexpectedly ſhould aſſail them, they are no ſooner attacked than overcome; and their reaſon, which governed, while it met no oppoſition, has not power to reſiſt the ſmalleſt effort.

People of a cold complexion, who conſult their eyes rather than their hearts, are better judges of the paſſions of others, than thoſe who are animated, impetuous, or vain, who begin by putting themſelves in the place of others, and never ſee, while they feel.

Obſer-

Obſervation teaches us, that there are characters which announce themſelves almoſt at their birth; children who may be ſtudied even in their nurſes arms. Theſe form a diſtinct claſs, and imbibe their principles from the commencement of their exiſtence. In reſpect to the others who unfold themſelves more ſlowly, to aim at forming their minds without knowing their bent, is to run the riſk of ſpoiling the good that nature has done, and to ſubſtitute evil in its place.

To change the principles we muſt change the internal organization; to alter the character, we muſt alter the diſpoſition on which it depends. Who ever heard of a violent man becoming phlegmatic, or a cold and methodical temper acquiring

livelineſs of imagination? For my part, I ſhould as eaſily conceive the poſſibility of a black man becoming white, or a fool becoming wiſe. It is in vain therefore to pretend to form all the various characters by one common model, we may reſtrain, but cannot change them; we may prevent men from ſhewing themſelves for what they are, but cannot render them what they are not; and if they diſguiſe themſelves in the ordinary occurrences of life, we ſee them on every important occaſion reſume their natural character, and give themſelves up to it with ſo much the leſs regulation, as they no longer know any in yielding to it; and further, we ſhould never attempt to change the character, or alter the natural diſpoſition: on the contrary,

we

we ſhould give it its full bent, we ſhould cultivate and prevent its degenerating; for it is by theſe means that man becomes all he ought to be, and that the work of nature is completed by education. Now, before we cultivate a diſpoſition, it is neceſſary to ſtudy it. In order to do this, we muſt wait patiently till it unfolds itſelf, giving it occaſions of ſo doing; and rather refrain from doing any thing, than by acting prematurely run the riſk of doing wrong. The genius of ſome require wings, while that of others muſt be fettered; ſome muſt be urged forward, others reſtrained; one requires being encouraged, another intimidated: ſometimes we muſt enlighten, ſometimes repreſs an imagination. There are men formed to carry human knowledge to its utmoſt

utmoſt limits; there are others to whom it is even fatal that they can read. We muſt wait for the light of reaſon, when the rays of it firſt illumine the mind, the character is diſplayed, and we perceive its natural tendency; by reaſon it is cultivated, as by reaſon it is formed, and the proper education of man can never commence previous to the expanſion of his reaſon.

Every charactar is in itſelf virtuous and good; there are no errors in nature; all the vices imputed to it, are the effect of the diſguiſe we force it to take. The propenſities of all the villains that have diſgraced humanity, if attention had been paid to direct them properly, would have produced the moſt ſublime virtues, there are no minds ſo untoward but

that

that ſome uſeful talents might have been drawn from them, by giving them a proper biaſs, as deformed and monſtrous figures are rendered proportionable and beautiful, by being placed in a right point of view.

COQUETRY.

IT requires a diſcernment infinitely more ſubtle to be ſkilled in the art of coquetry, than in that of politeneſs; for provided that a well-bred woman is polite to every body, it is enough; but a coquet would ſoon loſe her empire by ſuch an unſkilful uniformity. From a deſire to oblige all her lovers, ſhe would diſcourage them all. In ſociety, our conduct cannot fail to pleaſe ſome of thoſe with whom we converſe: provided they are well treated, they do not examine very nicely into preferences: but among lovers, a favour that is not excluſive is an injury. A man of ſenſibility would much rather be the only one of his miſtreſſes lovers whom ſhe ill

treated, than be indiſcriminately favoured; the greateſt mortification to him would be to be undiſtinguiſhed. A woman who is deſirous of preſerving many lovers, muſt perſuade, each of them that he has the preference, ſhe muſt perſuade him of this even in the preſence of the others, as ſhe muſt perſuade them of it, equaily in his.

Would you know the ſituation of all others the moſt embarraſſing? 'tis that of a man in the ſociety of two women, with each of whom he has a ſecret connection, what a ridiculous figure does he make? Place a woman in the ſame ſituation with two men (and ſurely the example is not more uncommon) you will be aſtoniſhed to ſee with what addreſs ſhe impoſes on each of them, and contrives

trives that they ſhall laugh at each other. Now, if this woman marked the ſame confidence, and conducted herſelf with the ſame familiarity to both, they would not be one moment her dupes. In treating them alike, would ſhe not prove each had the ſame claim? How infinitely better does ſhe manage, far from treating them alike, ſhe affects to make a diſtinction between them, and contrives ſo well, that he whom ſhe flatters, thinks it proceeds from tenderneſs, while he whom ſhe uſes ill, attributes it to reſentment; thus each ſatisfied with his lot, ſuppoſes ſhe is occupied about him alone, while ſhe in reality is occupied only about herſelf.

ADVERSITY.

REASON points out that we ſhould bear misfortunes patiently, and not render them more inſupportable by fruitleſs complaints, that we ſhould not value the advantages of the world beyond their worth, nor exhauſt in weeping over our miſeries thoſe powers which were given us to ſuſtain them; and finally, that we ſhould recollect it is impoſſible for man to dive into futurity, or to know whether what happens to him is really a misfortune or a bleſſing. It is thus that a judicious and moderate man conducts himſelf in misfortune, he ſeeks to make advantage of his diſappointments, as a ſkilful player profits even by an unlucky ſtroke of chance;

far

far from complaining, like a child who falls down and cries, beſide the ſtone that ſtrikes it, he can, if neceſſary, himſelf probe the wound to accelerate the cure.

Whatever is the work of man, man can deſtroy. There are no indelible characters, but thoſe imprinted by nature, and nature makes neither kings, princes, or great lords. What then would become of a governor of the Eaſt, brought up in luxury and ſplendor, ſhould a reverſe of fortune deprive him of his power? What would become of the publican, who, living in all the profuſion of wealth, ſhould a ſudden ſtroke of fortune deprive him of his riches? What would become of that proud indolent man, who, ceaſing to make uſe of his faculties, depends on the

aſſiſtance

aſſiſtance of others in every article, ſhould he loſe the means of acquiring theſe foreign aids to his aſſiſtance? Happy is the man who knows how to quit the ſtation that quits him, and is himſelf, in every ſituation! Let thoſe who think the monarch worthy of their admiration, that furiouſly reſolved to periſh with the ruins of his throne, ſtill laviſh encomiums on him; for my part, I think he merits only contempt. I perceive that he exiſts only by his crown, and ceaſes to be any thing when no longer a king; but he, who, though he loſes his crown, is ſtill himſelf, is then above all that fortune could make him. From the rank of a monarch, which, as chance directs, may be filled by a coward, a fool, or a knave; he riſes to the

ſtation

ſtation of a man, which ſo few men fill properly; then does he triumph over fortune, for he owes nothing but to himſelf. What a value muſt this give to the reflection, that he ſtill receives the homage of every heart, which duly appreciates what is reſpectable in human nature. How infinitely more glorious, in my eyes, is the king of Syracuſe, ſchool-maſter at Corinth, and the king of Macedon, recorder at Rome, than the wretched Tarquin, who, when he no longer reigned, knew not how to diſpoſe of himſelf; or the ſtill more wretched Vonone, (ſon of the illuſtrious Phraaetes king of Parthea,) the ſport of all who choſe to inſult his miſery, wandering from court to court entreating aſſiſtence, and meeting only indignities, from his knowing

ing only, that buſineſs, which it was no longer in his power to follow.

Thoſe who would render fortune and circumſtances ſubject to them, muſt begin by making themſelves independent of them. Thoſe who would rule by opinion, muſt firſt have dominion over it.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

ERRATA TO THE FIRST VOLUME.

Preface, for tranſaction, read *tranſlation.*

Page 3. line 6. for detailed,——*confuſed.*
4. l. 12. for I have,——*thoſe.*
10. l. 5. for that,——*though.*
11. l. 11. for ſeat,——*all things.*
16. l. 4. a full ſtop after *divinity,* a comma after *world.*
34. l. 19. for many,——*few.*
65. l. 5. for difdifuſive,——*diffuſive.*
112. l. 1. for individual,——*individuals.*
149. l. 10. after how,——*to individuals.*

VOL. II.

23. l. 2. for voting,——*acting.*
65. l. 5. a comma after *beg,* no ſtop after *do it.*
133. l. 8. for caſe,——*law.*
153. l. 5. for axe,——*axes.*

ERRATA TO THE FIRST VOLUME.

Preface, for translation, read *translation*.

Page, 3. line 6. for detailed,——*confused*.

4. l. 12. for I have,——*[illegible]*.

10. l. 5. for that,——*[illegible]*.

11. l. 11. for sent,——*all things*.

16. l. 4. a full stop after *divinity*, a comma after *world*.

34. l. 19. for many,——*few*.

65. l. 5. for disdifesive,——*diffusive*.

112. l. 1. for individual,——*individuals*.

149. l. 10. after how,——*to individuals*.

VOL. II.

23. l. 2. for voting,——*dying*.

65. l. 5. a comma after *big*, no stop after *de is*.

155. l. 8. for cafe,——*face*.

153. l. 5. for axe,——*axes*.